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Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

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AUGUST, 1943

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# *Rubbra and the Dominant Seventh: Notes on an English Symphony*

BY

W. H. MELLERS

"We want, not a new technique, but the old feeling, felt as new."—W. B. YEATS.

## I

It was the custom of the late Donald Francis Tovey to divide musical composition into two main classes, which he called respectively musical textures and musical shapes. The prime example of the musical texture is the fugue, and all music in the broadest sense fugally conceived: the prime example of the musical shape or architecture is the classical diatonic symphony or sonata. The musical texture is associated, roughly speaking, with melody and the voice, is fluid in tonality and rhythm, is continuous, polyphonic and self-generative, and has no "form" apart from the organic evolution of its component lines. The shape, on the other hand, with its double bars and repeats, its exposition, development and recapitulation, its oppositions of "subjects" and key-centres, is homophonic rather than polyphonic, dance-like rather than vocal, and has a clearly defined architectural symmetry which may (if only for convenience) be mentally imaged apart from the evolution of the lines, as the physical movements of a dance exist apart from the dance's music. The texture or fugue attains the utmost emotional tension within the conventions of melodic language; the contrasts of key-centres which are the mainstay of the diatonic sonata imbue it with a quality to which we apply, perhaps clumsily, the adjective "dramatic". Thus there is a popularly accepted notion that it is possible to consider a Beethoven (or even a Mozart) symphonic movement as a kind of microcosm of a human drama, not to mention the crudities to which such an approach is susceptible with (say) Tchaikowsky. Of course the notion is fundamentally fallacious since no music, as distinct from ideas *about* music, can be apprehended except through the human ear; but perhaps we may legitimately say that there is less likelihood of our attempting to apprehend fugal or texture music in other than musical terms.

One cannot imagine a Bach fugue or a Palestrina motet requiring any purely architectural chords to complete it; on the other hand the forty odd bars of the chord of C major at the end of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony do not contain a single redundancy; such is the nature of the texture-shape distinction.<sup>1</sup> Of course this is inevitably a crude restatement of Tovey's case, and there can be no hard and fast line, for in any healthy musical society textures and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Schweitzer's *Bach*, Vol. I, p. 211: "Bach's way of working, as Spitta says, was quite different from Beethoven's. The latter experimented with his thoughts. In each case the explanation must be sought in the nature of the music itself. With Beethoven the work is developed by means of 'episodes' that are independent of the theme. These do not occur in Bach; with him everything that happens is simply an emanation from the theme."



shapes are interoperative, mutually enriching each other (for instance, most of Bach's dance movements and arias, the concerted arias of Mozart, the finale of the *Jupiter*). Nonetheless, I think it may be accepted that a decay of the principles of texture is a decay of the fundamentals of musical speech, and that a musical architecture is likely to collapse if it has no foundation other than rhythm and harmony divorced from melody, polyphony and the voice. The "rules" of harmony itself enforce this contention; and certainly at the beginning of the present century the prevailing homophony was so far enfeebled (the sociological-cum-technical reasons for this prevalence do not concern us here) that the more significant composers almost without exception felt imperative the re-creation of texture and a vocal mode of thought. (I say more "significant", though some of the most representative and important of contemporary composers, for instance, Schönberg and in many of their works Hindemith and Stravinsky, assiduously cultivated texture while they cultivated the voice not at all, maintaining that instrumental technique had out-moded it. Such a divorce between voice and texture I believe to be fundamentally fallacious and illogical.)

For some time it seemed as though the symphony was doomed, being essentially a product of diatonicism, and hence of an age more stable than our own. In Mahler's Ninth Symphony one can see the diatonic symphony disintegrating into a very beautiful twilight which presages atonalism and the twelve-tone instrumental texture; and although Sibelius gave the symphony fresh vigour it has always seemed to me that (except possibly in No. 4) he is the last of the old diatonic-homophonic ethos, rather than the beginning of something new. After Sibelius, the only composer who has made a significant and consistent contribution to the contemporary symphonic problem is Edmund Rubbra,<sup>2</sup> and technically one can say that he has worked towards making free polyphonic lines the basis of symphonic structure; or towards the reconciliation of texture and shape. The symphonic problem, as Rubbra conceives it, is probably the central problem of musical evolution to-day.

I have written in two previous articles of what I take to be the importance of Rubbra's first three symphonies. Here it is necessary to say of them only that the remorselessness of the free polyphony developed over the whole orchestra, and on symphonic dimensions, gives to the first two an extreme nervous intensity that may properly be called contemporary, though both works are of a bigness, seriousness and originality besides which much contemporary music looks like child's play (the slow movement of No. 2, Rubbra's finest achievement up to that date, is, however, also his most "classical" and profoundly calm). The much greater clarity and (*apparent*) simplicity of No. 3 is testimony both to the maturity of the composer's spiritual resources and to his more completely successful solution of his symphonic problem of the reconciliation of texture and shape—the "spiritual" and "technical" are of

<sup>2</sup> There have of course been other sporadic and distinguished contributions to the contemporary symphonic problem, notably the fine symphonies of Roussel, the very interesting and "textural" one-movement work of Roy Harris and, in a more limited way, Vaughan Williams's *Pastoral*; but Rubbra's symphonic work is by a long way the most serious and consistent venture.



course ultimately identical. No. 3 is more lucid, more clearly organized, more stable in tonality and at the same time more vocal, more lyrical, more fluid. It is perhaps the most "positive" work in twentieth-century music; and it is a perfect reconciliation of the principles of texture with those of shape. No. 4, which was given a first performance at a "Prom." concert last August, is no less positive, perhaps even warmer and richer, but also subtler, more delicate, at once tender and strong in sensibility. I want to approach this characteristic subtlety by way of a technical feature which is not very noticeable in Rubbra's earlier work—I mean his treatment of the dominant seventh.

## II

The unprepared dominant seventh, the history books tell us, not altogether accurately, was the chord with which Monteverdi revolutionized musical history; the chord most closely associated with the dominant-tonic cadence of the architecture of the classical symphony and with the sequence of romanticism—a chord of finality and symmetry, or of harmonic chromaticism, to which Rubbra's idiom, with its essentially vocal lyricism, its prevalence of conjunct motion and perfect consonances, its plastic modality and rhythm, its transitions rather than modulations, its insistence on continuity and melodic generation, is severely opposed. So close, indeed, is Rubbra's melodic idiom and his principle of melodic-polyphonic growth to the methods of the sixteenth century (for all his originality) that his symphonies have been referred to, excusably if inadequately, as gigantic instrumental motets; and it is not surprising that in music so texturally conceived the dominant seventh should have little place.<sup>3</sup> In the harsh and austere 1st, and the polyphonically very complex 2nd the harmonic subtlety depends largely on polyphonic treatment of the triad: in No. 3 the dominant seventh appears more frequently but in a fluid and usually melodic guise. The harmony of No. 4 again shows no trace of the higher chromatic discords, and apart from polyphonic combinations includes only diatonic triads and seventh chords; but these seventh chords have now become a very prominent part of the harmonic idiom, appearing many times homophonically, and the fact that the chord has been absorbed into Rubbra's "generative" lyric symphony testifies to an expansion of his technique (a still wider acceptance of homophony within a basically polyphonic idiom) which in turn reflects a deepening quality of experience.

The originality of Rubbra's use of the dominant seventh is another instance of his power to create a personal and self-consistent idiom out of the accepted materials of European tradition, without indulgence in the explicitly revolutionary. In Rubbra's Fourth the dominant seventh has all its traditional warmth and full-bloodedness but none of its conventional penultimate implications. The sevenths do not "resolve": like his tonal and rhythmic sense they are clear and lucid but continually flowing, so that they acquire, in their lyric context, a quality at once rich and curiously pure and disembodied. A

<sup>3</sup> Rubbra's teacher Holst developed an almost fanatical hatred of the dominant seventh; though I do not think this "influence" was the fundamental reason for Rubbra's distrust of the chord.

traditional material of homophony and of musical shape here merges into texture; and the increased warmth and serenity of No. 4 might be said to be summarized in this insistence on the dominant seventh, while the increased subtlety and poignancy is summarized in the textural manner in which this insistence is made.

The spacious homophonic opening of the first movement (*con moto*) is an excellent example of this, besides illustrating the characteristic fluidity of the always beautifully singable tonal sense:—



Despite this homophony, the movement has no "external" architecture. The generation is entirely lyrical—the continuous growth of melodic ideas into fresh organisms, sometimes by the gradual extension of a phrase, sometimes by the dissection of a phrase into its component parts—components which, after the generation of the new idea, may continue to fulfil a subservient function in the contrapuntal texture. Almost all the melodic material of the movement springs from the falling fifth and rising third (both major and minor) of the opening phrase; the throbbing syncopated undercurrent of dominant sevenths and diatonic concords—continually oscillating to and from the seventh which never resolves—gives to the evolution of the lyricism a warmth which is also quietly expectant—instinct with intimations of new germination and eventual blossoming. Soon, indeed, a little curling semi-quaver figure (*cf.* the semitonal figure which plays so important a part in No. 3) emerges from some cross-bar extensions of the line, increasingly to dominate the whole movement. For the first time a key-centre (E minor) is established when this figure is developed in a rich passage of dialogue between horns and low strings, though the lines remain always plastic, finely lyrical and vocal in feeling. The tonality relaxes again while the semiquaver figure continues incessantly and the phrases of falling fifths and rising thirds become more and more subtly interwoven.

After an exquisitely tender passage on falling fifths there eventually generates a ferocious extension of the rising third phrase on the trombones, and this leads, by way of a supple swaying sequential passage on strings (harmonically founded on dominant sevenths and developing the more animated trombone rhythm), to the building up of a big climax over the semiquaver figure's dynamic pulse, the harmonies oscillating between dominant sevenths of D and B. The passage from the trombone melody to the build-up of the climax may be quoted as a particularly beautiful and typical example of Rubbra's method:—

Violins, Violas, Oboe

*f* Trombones

etc.

Over this base a fresh theme (the nearest approach to an orthodox "second subject") generates itself on the woodwind from the syncopated rhythm and dominant sevenths of the opening accompaniment:—

*pp* Wood Wind

Violins

etc.

\* These notes should read D and A.

Through the *meno mosso* passage a fluid G minor had established itself and intimations of a "modal" C minor and F minor are heard as a flowing song-like countersubject in plastic triplets grows on the strings through the mingling of conjunct motion with the rising thirds and falling fifths. The texture becomes increasingly polyphonic as the music gathers momentum over a timpani pedal on A flat, and the movement's climax comes (with a G minorish return) in a medley of the independent rhythms of the various melodies, horns and brass interjecting aggressive diminutions and double diminutions of the "second subject" figure. Every strand of the tissue of this climax (the only "dissonant" passage in the whole movement) is a consequence of logical polyphonic growth; even in this extreme passage one can observe (though of course it is a matter of experience and not of theory) the seed of the flowing string melody in the original rising third and falling fifth:

The musical score is arranged in three systems. The first system includes staves for Strings, Horns, and Tromba. The Strings staff is in the treble clef, while the Horns and Tromba staves are in the bass clef. The music is characterized by triplets and a mix of conjunct motion with rising thirds and falling fifths. The second system continues this polyphonic texture, with the Tromba staff showing more complex rhythmic patterns. The score concludes with the word 'etc'.

The tension calms and leads, not to a conventional recapitulation, but to a section resembling the homophonic opening, though with the tonal relations (beginning in E flat major-minor) still more compressed and elliptical. The tonality finally droops down to D major (D being significantly the flat seventh from the opening E), with the curling semiquaver figure insisting on the flattened seventh, thereby at the close consummating melodically what remains to the end harmonically unresolved. If it is possible to give any technical explanation of the profound calm and serenity of the close of this movement (the most serene music Rubbra has given us), I think it must be in terms of the melodic significance with which the composer invests, at this point, the flattened

seventh; and perhaps in terms of the explicit statement, by the woodwind, in the closing bars, of the previously implicit relation between the "second subject" and the opening syncopated accompaniment.

Dominant sevenths do not pervade the other movements to the same extent, but appear frequently in the flowing texture of the second, an Intermezzo. Whereas the first movement generates melody and climax with the utmost intensity, the Intermezzo glides by without climax, and is rather a series of uninterrupted reflections on a single melody-group which the polyphony kaleidoscopically presents in shifting tonal and rhythmic guises. (This polyphonic commentary rather than growth has been used in the scherzo of No. 3 also.) The movement's main melodic material is indicated in the following quotations:—



and its light, continuous play of fancy, in a delicate waltz rhythm (if the term is not misleading of music so subtly distinguished) serves as a brief, gentle relaxation between the concentration of the first movement and the third. Particularly remarkable is the manner in which the subtlety of the linear contour fully reveals itself only when the parts are allotted their orchestral tone-colour, exquisitely soft and pearly, dominated by violas and woodwind, with an occasional piquancy of trumpet. The tonality centres round a kind of Lydian G flat, with hints of D major, B minor and A flat minor, but, though dance-like, the melodies and rhythms always preserve a vocal flexibility manifested most clearly in the nature of the tonal transitions. An especially lovely instance is this transition into B minor:



and the whole movement is an idyllic marriage of the principles of voice and dance.

The introduction to the finale is founded almost entirely on the opening

phrase of drooping semitone, rising sixth and descending tritone; though quiet, the music is intensely concentrated:—



After a while it broadens into a six-eight rhythm, with many of the lyrical lines flowing freely across the bar-lines, and subsides on to a B minor triad in throbbing syncopated triplets on the trombones, around which the strings indulge in quasi-canonic dialogues developing the opening phrases, particularly rising and falling sixths. The music gathers power with a noble entry on the trumpets and trombones, and then is suddenly stilled, a whispered repetition of the opening phrase over a distant timpanum reference to the rhythm of the climax leading directly into the finale (*allegro maestoso*).

Although the finale has no "thematic relation" with the introduction it is felt to be its necessary consummation. It opens polyphonically with a big swaying melody on horns and violins with a countersubject on trombones and violas, over a descending scale ostinato in the Phrygian mode. Rubbra's fondness for the ostinato is perhaps his only legacy from his teacher Holst whose music so often owes its somewhat exacerbated nervous force to the tension between the wavering prose-rhythms of his lines and the rigidity of the ostinatos which he employed in order to give them stability. Rubbra's lines, though equally free, are much more lyrical and song-like than Holst's so that the force of his music is less, as it were, frustrated; but the combination of his ("English sixteenth-century") lyrical sense with a partiality for the dynamic ostinato is obviously relevant to his preoccupation with the texture-shape problem (for you cannot have a more rigid shape than perpetual repetition), and does give his music at times a concentration which, as J. A. Westrup pointed out, reminds one of Purcell (who also occupies a transitional position in the matter of texture and shape).<sup>4</sup> The parallel, however vague, certainly suggests the centrality of Rubbra's place in the English tradition.

In some ways the melody of this finale is one of the most remarkable and distinguished Rubbra has created. It has a bold heroic quality in its enormous sweep and rhythmic vitality and freedom, while at the same time its subtly plastic tonal feeling, shifting between Aeolian, Phrygian and major and minor third, with occasional pungent tritones, seems to imbue its lyricism with an emotion deeply melancholy. It is both heroic and completely contemporary

<sup>4</sup> It is significant that in this (*Listener*) article Mr. Westrup compares Rubbra's Fourth both to the sixteenth-century masters and to Handel—the supreme exponents of texture and shape, respectively. While I see what he means by the reference to Handel, I think the comparison is misleading and that his reference to Purcell makes the same point more accurately. Mr. Westrup's article is an excellent introduction to the general principles of Rubbra's work.



—without any of the limiting nostalgia that, say, Bax's "heroic" finale tunes are prone to:—

*Allegro maestoso*

*con 8*

*Trumpet*

*etc.*

As the melody grows the rhythm and tonality become clearer and bolder (the bouncing dotted rhythm continuing throughout in the countersubject), and the underlying ostinato acquires first F sharp, then C sharp (the main melody is now more or less in B minor), then G sharp; and finally D sharp, when we have arrived at a lucid E major.

There is then a sudden *piano* enharmonic transition to E flat minor-like tonalities, the ostinato moving to rising fourths, followed by a further falling to D major, the melodies broadening to a *meno mosso* section which both increases and, as it were, suspends the excitement by the oscillations of its tonal centre around B, E flat and E. A triplet figure in the accompaniment grows into a quiet E flat major-minor interlude making exquisite use of falling fourths and leading by way of a quasi-canonic duet between flutes and cellos,

to a return of the original movement over repeated dominant sevenths of D, in the double-dotted rhythm, while strings evolve flowing triplets in thirds from the accompanying triplets of the flute-cello duo. The seventh G of the bass falls chromatically to E and the ostinato of the opening is re-established with the original subject and countersubject and a new theme, growing from the rocking triplets of the strings, soaring on top. The tonal clarifying of the melodies and ostinato proceed as earlier in the movement until the establishment of diatonic E major introduces a massive chorale-like theme in canon which, although it hasn't previously been referred to (if one discounts the fact that the curl downwards of a tone and the return to the tonic are an important ingredient of it) is manifestly the consummation not only of the movement but of the whole work. Music of such direct nobility is to be found nowhere else in immediately contemporary music, but its canonic concentration is proof of an integrity and sanity that is more than merely technical. Although the tune is *trionfale* it is certainly not gay; it is experience arrived at through the pride and sinewy sadness of the trumpet melody of the earlier part of the movement, a melody at once actively human in its lyrical buoyancy and lonely and remote in its tonal elusiveness and precariousness. The final E major trombone triads of the "chorale" seem to imply a reference back to the syncopated rhythm of the D major end of the first movement—the *con moto*'s droop to the flattened seventh has curled back proudly to the tonic; the Symphony is an experience and an affirmation of faith.

If one asks faith in what? one may answer without facetiousness: in itself. While keeping as close to the text of the music as I could, I have tried in these notes to give some idea of what seems to me the approximate equivalent of the music in humanistic (emotional) terms, as one must do in any attempt to use words to say anything about music; but obviously such an attempt is bound to be in some degree subjective. I have tried to give a little technical support (e.g. the lyrical and vocal nature of the lines, the treatment of the dominant seventh, etc.) to my feeling that the work is "serene" and "triumphant", if not easily so; and I think I could give some reasons why I disagree with those critics who seem to feel that it is "stark" and "unhappy"; but as Rubbra himself has pointed out in a broadcast talk on the work, though one may say that at this point or that the music has this or the other emotional characteristic, such clumsy translations cannot stand in lieu of the music which can be fully apprehended only in and for itself, *qua* music. The Symphony is not "about" anything, but is, in the philosophical sense, an "essence". This, which is ultimately true of all music though perhaps less obviously so of the representative music of the nineteenth century, is another way of insisting on the essentially "textural" nature of the work, and brings us back to the point from which these notes started. Rubbra's Fourth is not the "representation" of a pattern of experience which exists outside itself, but is itself a self-subsistent world with its own laws of germination, growth, bloom and decay. The ultimate mystery of art is perhaps that this world is *also* a quintessence of human experience, but it is not to be understood by crude parallels, nor at all save by accepting it and listening to it on its own terms. Writing about



music amounts, or should amount, to an effort to train its readers in the apprehension of the musical organism; it should make them more eager to listen.

### III

In concentrating, in this analysis, largely on the significance of Rubbra's treatment of the dominant seventh, particularly in the first movement, I have of necessity omitted much. For one thing, any adequate account of his orchestration would involve almost a bar for bar dissection because with him orchestration cannot be separated from line, nor line from composition. For instance, my account of the reasons why the so-called "recapitulation" of the first movement produces so different an emotional effect from the opening—is so serenely consummated whereas the opening was quietly expectant—ignored completely the part played in this metamorphosis by the modified orchestration, especially the picking out of the central motives by the trumpet. In general, the tendency to reserve strings, woodwind and brass to independent functions, noticeable in the earlier symphonies, is here accentuated, but the increased clarity of the texture of composition means of course increased clarity in the orchestration too, and there are none of the angry linear-colouristic oppositions that in the first two symphonies gave the climaxes a nervous intensity slightly disproportionate to their proper musical effect. In the Fourth, the extended use of the trumpet in the finale (which with lines of less distinction might easily have been banal) is exquisitely apposite, as is the dominance of woodwind and violas in the Intermezzo, while the strings-brass altercation at the climax of the *con moto* is orchestrally (as well, inevitably, as creatively) one of the most remarkable of Rubbra's achievements. Sometimes theory of what should be appropriate to the delineation of the lines somewhat outruns practice; the lovely passage in the first movement for horns and low strings, which looks so rich and poised in score (and sounds so on the piano), in the Albert Hall at least seemed rather gruff and hollow, but the intention was logical enough, and no doubt better acoustic conditions and more adequate rehearsal would reveal it as completely realized. In any case one must be sure, before criticizing Rubbra's orchestration, that one has fully assimilated the musical material of the passage in question. If one looks for "tone-colour" for its own sake one may well find Rubbra's orchestration "ungrateful" and may even regret that it is not like Benjamin Britten's; those people who found the orchestration of Nos. 1 and 2 harsh, ruthless and even painful, and that of No. 4 grey and monotonous, did so largely, I believe, because of a tardiness in accepting a musical outlook fresh and, if by no means obscure, certainly the reverse of superficial. Similar charges were made, contemporaneously, against some of the greatest composers in history.<sup>5</sup>

The nature of Rubbra's tonal transitions is another subject which I have

<sup>5</sup> If one compares Rubbra's work with that of (say) Aaron Copland, whose music always "sounds" superbly and whose approach, depending on the sharp, lucid articulation of a sound-pattern rather than on melodic generation, is the polar opposite of Rubbra's, it is true that Rubbra's music seems to lack 'incandescence' and to be narrowly restricted in its range of movement. But I think this is an inevitable consequence of Rubbra's attitude to his art at the present stage of his development; and one does not demand 'variety' of an extended fugal work of Bach.

glanced over and which is worth a paper to itself. One uses the word transition rather than modulation because Rubbra's shifts of tonal centre are always lyrical, linearly conceived, and not primarily harmonic in significance, and because although continually shifting, his tonal modifications are fluid rather than abrupt. The manner in which they tend to centre round an initial tone is significant; the first and last movements' continual oscillations between E, D and E flat have a general significance with reference to his method as well as the particular ones I have referred to. The more extreme transitions, such as the "modal" A flat leading to the climax of the *con moto*, are the more powerful for being tentatively arrived at.

I have also omitted to mention the remarkable melodic and harmonic affinities between parts of this work (particularly the six-eight sections of the first movement and of the introduction to the finale, with their rounded semitonal figure and flowing fourths) and the Symphony No. 3—affinities which argue, of course, not poverty of invention, but the continuity of Rubbra's thought not only from movement to movement, but from symphony to symphony. But despite the inadequacy of these notes, I have thought it worth while to concentrate on his treatment of the dominant seventh because this is the element which both spiritually and technically is new in No. 4, and which indicates the direction along which Rubbra's sensibility is likely to advance. This personal use of the seventh, and the subtlety and serenity of spirit which it plays its part in incarnating (a serenity so rare in the music of to-day and so increasingly valuable), are certainly explored further in the marvellous opening to No. 5, in which the voice (the mainspring of texture music) may explicitly come into its own, for Rubbra tells me that the symphony will probably be choral, with words by Henry Vaughan. Some such mating of symphony orchestra and choral polyphony was perhaps implicit in Rubbra's texture-shape problem from the start; certainly one awaits the work expectantly.

Historical ifs are always futile and presumptuous because it is men doing and dying with such apparent lack of discrimination that make history and not the other way round; but I think it is relevant in this connexion to enquire what would have happened to the history of symphonic writing if Beethoven had composed his Choral Symphony *after* the last Quartets instead of before; or if he had lived to write the symphonic-choral works which at the time of his death he was planning. Rubbra is not a composer who has any kinship with Beethoven; closer to the English sixteenth century he has always been relatively a texture composer and has anyway, for all the traditional nature of his materials, one of the most personal and consistent manners of any contemporary composer. But without implying any comparison, I have asked this question at the end of these notes as a means of indicating what I believe, when the history of contemporary music is past history, will be found to be the measure of Rubbra's historical, his evolutionary, significance, assuming that Europe's musical traditions survive. If they don't survive, and are painfully replaced by new ones, the general nature of which I once tried to suggest in an essay on Mahler as key-figure, that will not in any way lessen the intrinsic value of Rubbra's music.

## Haydn's Hymn and Burney's Translation

BY

OTTO ERICH DEUTSCH

SINCE the occupation of Austria in 1938 Haydn's *Emperor's Hymn* has been generally regarded as the German national air. After the last war, on 11th August, 1922, it was, in fact, with Hoffmann von Fallersleben's text of 1841, *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles*, officially declared to be the National Anthem of the German Republic, and the Austrian Republic in 1920 chose as its National Hymn an air by Wilhelm Kienzl with words by Karl Renner (*Deutsch-Oesterreich, du herrliches Land, wir lieben dich*). In 1929, however, this was renounced and the old tune, with new words by Ottokar Kernstock, was restored to its former honourable place in Austria. Curiously enough, the Austrian Government was compelled to drop one stanza by this nationalist poet on account of its inference to a Greater Germany. In 1938, when the Germans overran Austria, the germanized *Neue Freie Presse* printed a leader about "Hoffmann von Fallersleben's Hymn, set to music by Haydn". The world to-day seems to accept this additional German aggression by placing a ban on Haydn's Hymn among the music of the Allied Nations. The Free Austrians ironically reflect that although the British National Air was adapted much earlier<sup>1</sup> for *Heil dir im Siegerkranz*, none of the Allied Nations in 1914-18 would have dared to suggest the suppression of the tune of "God Save the King" for the duration of the war. Now, however, even Haydn's Emperor Quartet, with the variations on the Austrian Hymn, seems to be taboo in Britain.

It is well known that this famous National Hymn—the only one to be written by a Master—was inspired by "God save great George our King", which was heard frequently by Haydn during his two sojourns in England. In 1796 when the war in Italy brought Napoleon's army nearer to Austria, Haydn suggested the introduction of a similar Hymn for his country. The first attempt<sup>2</sup> was, perhaps, an adaptation of the British Hymn; indeed, a snuff-box, since acquired by the Vienna City Museum, was offered for sale in that city in about 1935, on the lid of which was printed, from an engraved plate, such an adaptation, and it is dated 1797. It must have been made

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<sup>1</sup> The English National Hymn was, in its German version, *Heil dir im Siegerkranz*, even attributed to Handel as early as 1797 in Berlin, when J. M. Böheim reprinted that version in his selection of Masonic songs, second part, No. 12, p. 40 (British Museum).

<sup>2</sup> The first German version of "God save the King" was also connected with Austria, but only in addressing Joseph II, who was at that time Emperor of Austria and of Germany. It was written by August Niemann and published in his *Akademisches Liederbuch*, Dessau, 1782:

"Heil! Kaiser Joseph, Heil!  
Dir Deutschlands Vater, Heil!  
Dem Kaiser Heil!"

This was eleven years before *Heil dir im Siegerkranz* was printed for the first time in Berlin.

very early in the year, because on 12th February, 1797—Francis I's birthday<sup>3</sup>—Haydn's Hymn was sung in all the theatres of Austria where official copies were distributed among the audiences. The government commissioned the minor poet Lorenz Leopold Haschka<sup>4</sup> to write the verses, and his manuscript is preserved in the Steiermärkische Landesarchiv at Graz. Haydn's first sketch,<sup>5</sup> giving the treble part only and the four original stanzas, is to be found in the Archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, and his fair copy, in which he gives only the first stanza of the original poem, in the National-Bibliothek at Vienna, where—among other MS. arrangements by Haydn himself—may be found a copy of the rare first edition of the Hymn, complete with music and the whole original poem.

In 1809, the year of Haydn's death, a new stanza was added for Francis' third wife, Maria Ludovica, and the equivocal third stanza was dropped. The whole poem was altered, not very successfully, by an anonymous official after the Napoleonic wars, *i.e.* after 1815, and other versions were introduced for the successors of Francis, the most famous being that of Johann Gabriel Seidl (1854) for Franz Joseph and his wife Elisabeth.

Here we are concerned only with the first and second versions of the poem which deal exclusively with Francis I. It is strange to note that the second version is the better known not only in England but also in Germany. This version is to be found in all the German collections of popular songs (*e.g.* Erlach's *Volkslieder der Deutschen*, Mannheim, 1835, Vol. IV, pp. 472 f.) and an English translation of this version by Maria Ximenes Hayes was printed in 1881 in Chappell's *Vocal Library of Part Songs, etc.* (No. 85), where it is set for S.C.T.B. with piano accompaniment.

Haydn's tune has been adapted to other words many times in England; for instance, it was set to the words of the 87th Psalm in Edward Clare's *Psalmody* (c. 1850); as a song, "Tell me not in mournful numbers", words by Longfellow (1873); as an English hymn based on Psalm 148; as another hymn, "Praise the Lord, ye Heavens adore Him"; again as a hymn, "Glorious things of Thee are spoken"; and as an English patriotic "Song of The Motherland", to mention but six of the settings.

The most curious fact, however, is that Alfred Heuss in his learned essay

<sup>3</sup> We call him Francis I because he was, in fact, until 1806, Francis II only as Emperor of Germany, and Haydn's Hymn was the Austrian Hymn, not the "National German Hymn", as it is wrongly described in Philip Knapton's arrangement of 1825, published by Chappell & Co. Here it is set to the patriotic English words of John Crosse, "Lord of Heav'n and Earth and Ocean". Pleyel's so-called "German Hymn", very popular in England about 1800, is merely an adaptation of a movement from his String Quartet Op. 7, set to English words. It was given the name "German Hymn" on account of the nationality of the composer; for the same reason a popular tune by Giardini was called the "Italian Hymn".

<sup>4</sup> In the same year, 1797, Haschka wrote a Fatherland Song which was set to music by an anonymous composer and printed in Vienna:

"Noch sind wir Oesterreicher; noch  
Belastet uns kein fremdes Joch. . . ."

(Still we are Austrians, No foreign yoke enslaves us.)

<sup>5</sup> The story that Haydn adapted a Croatian folk-tune was short-lived and was soon discredited on the Continent. See Joseph Haydn's Werke (Breitkopf & Hartel), Serie XX, Band 1, 1932, p. xvii.

in the first number of the *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* (Oct. 1918) unwittingly bases Haydn's Hymn on a mixture of the two early versions, the first stanza being taken from the original form and the other three from the altered form. Since Heuss asserts that Haydn wrote his tune to single lines from all four stanzas, his whole conclusion is proved to be wrong.

Shortly after the first publication of the Emperor's Hymn, Haydn, it would seem, in about 1798, sent one or more copies to London, and Charles Burney, who in 1791 welcomed Haydn to England with a poem,<sup>6</sup> was inspired to translate the hymn, with alterations, into English. The original hymn, written for a single voice with accompaniment, consists of three four-bar phrases, the first and third of which are repeated. In Burney's version, set for two sopranos, bass and pianoforte, each stanza of which contains eight lines instead of six as in the original, all three phrases are repeated. (In both versions the last two lines are repeated as a refrain.) This version was published in 1799 by Broderip and Wilkinson in London under the title "Hymn for the Emperor/Translated by Dr: Burney/Composed by Doctor Haydn".<sup>7</sup> Copies are to be found in the British Museum, the University Library, Cambridge, and in the Paul Hirsch Library. There exist two later editions published in about 1805 (British Museum).

In the summer of 1799 Burney sent a copy to Haydn with the following letter:<sup>8</sup>

"*Al Celeberrimo Signore Giuseppe Haydn, in Vienna:*

Chelsea College, Aug. 19, 1799.

"My dear and much-honoured Friend,

"... The Divine Hymn, written for your imperial master, in imitation of our loyal song, 'God save great George our King', and set so admirably to music by yourself, I have translated and adapted to your melody, which is simple, grave, supplicating and pleasing. *La cadenza particolarmente mi pare nuova e squisitissima.* I have given our friend, Mr. Barthlemon, a copy of my English translation to transmit to you, with my affectionate and best respects. It was from seeing, in your letter to him, how well you wrote English, that I ventured to address you in my own language, for which my translation of your hymn will perhaps serve as an exercise; in comparing my version with the original, you will perceive that it is rather a paraphrase than a close translation; but the liberties I have taken were in consequence of the supposed treachery of some of his Imperial Majesty's generals and subjects, during the unfortunate campaign of Italy, of 1797, which the English all thought was the consequence, not of Buonaparte's heroism, but of Austrian and Italian treachery. . . .

Your enthusiastic admirer and affectionate Servant,

Charles Burney."

<sup>6</sup> Besides his "Verses on the Arrival in England of the Great Musician Haydn", which Percy A. Scholes in *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, Vol. III, p. 141, mentions as "the only poem ever published by Burney in separate form (i.e., as distinct from such few poems as appeared in periodicals)", Burney wrote and set to music in 1799 a popular song on the recent naval victories, which was sung at Covent Garden but, apparently, never printed. (Burney's *Memoirs*, Vol. III, pp. 268-70.)

<sup>7</sup> Burney's translation is not mentioned in the special chapter "Burney and Haydn" of Dr. Scholes' lecture on Burney (*Proceedings of the Musical Association*, 1940-1, pp. 23 f.) nor in his article on the same subject in the *Monthly Musical Record*, Oct., 1941, pp. 176 f. Alas! we have not seen the MS. of Dr. Scholes' larger work on Burney.

<sup>8</sup> First published in 1827 in *The Harmonicon*, Vol. V, p. 63.

Pohl and Botstiber, who reprinted the letter, were apparently unaware of the existence of Burney's English edition since they make no mention of it.<sup>9</sup> Burney in his letter probably alludes to the Peace of Campo Formio when he speaks of the treachery of Austria and Italy.<sup>11</sup> It seems that Haydn failed to receive this copy of Burney's version, as it is not mentioned in the Catalogue of his Library preserved in the British Museum.

Burney in his diary again refers to his translation of the Hymn in the following terms:

"Dover.

"This day, 5th September, 1799, pray mind! I went to Walmer Castle with Mrs. and Miss Crewe, to dine with Lady Jane Dundes. . . . My translation of the hymn, 'Long live the Emperor Francis!' was very well sung in duo by Lady Susan Ryder and Miss Crewe; I joining in the chorus. Lady Jane Dundes is a good musician, and has very good taste. I not only played this hymn of Haydn's setting, but Suwarrow's March to the great minister: and though Mr. Pitt never knows nor cares one farthing for flutes and fiddles, he was very attentive."<sup>11</sup>

Now let us compare the German and English texts:

Gott! erhalte Franz den Kaiser,  
Unsern guten Kaiser Franz!  
Lange lebe Franz der Kaiser  
In des Glückes hellstem Glanz!  
Ihm erblühen Lorbeer-Reiser,  
Wo er geht, zum Ehren-Kranz!  
/:Gott! erhalte Franz den Kaiser,  
Unsern guten Kaiser Franz!:/

Lass von seiner Fahnen Spitzen  
Strahlen Sieg und Fruchtbarkeit!  
Lass in seinem Rate sitzen  
Weisheit, Klugheit, Redlichkeit;  
Und mit seiner Hoheit Blitzen  
Schalten nur Gerechtigkeit!  
Gott! erhalte, &c.

God preserve the Emp'ror Francis!  
Sov'reign ever good and great;  
Save, o save him from mischances  
In Prosperity and State!  
May his Laurels ever blooming  
Be by Patriot Virtue fed;  
May his worth the world illumine  
And bring back the Sheep misled!  
/:God, preserve our Emp'ror Francis!  
Sov'reign ever good and great.:/

From his glorious Banners streaming,  
May success and plenty grow!  
In his Councils brightly beaming,  
O may wisdom, prudence flow!  
• Fill the hearts of his Commanders  
With integrity and zeal;  
Be they deaf to lies and slander  
Gainst their Prince and public weal.  
God, preserve, &c.

<sup>9</sup> Pohl, *Haydn in London*, pp. 358-60; Pohl-Botstiber, *Haydn*, Vol. III, pp. 31 f.

<sup>10</sup> The Italian people were, in fact, from the beginning of the war in favour of the French; and in Vienna there was a strong peace-party in opposition to Minister Thugut. All rumours, however, about treachery in the armies were based only on the surprising successes of Buonaparte and on the lack of appreciation for his military genius. The English were especially disappointed by some points of the peace-treaty: more, they were disgusted by the fact that Austria did not repay the secret war-loan lent to her, by Pitt.

<sup>11</sup> Burney, *Memoirs*, 1832, Vol. III, pp. 274 f.



Ströme Deiner Gaben Fülle  
 Ueber ihn, sein Haus und Reich!  
 Brich der Bosheit Macht; enthülle  
 Jeden Schelm- und Buben-Streich!  
 Dein Gesetz sei stets sein Wille;  
 Dieser uns Gesetzen gleich!  
 Gott! erhalte, &c.

All thy bounties good and gracious!  
 Pour on him, his house and realm  
 And in mercy, plots audacious  
 With confusion overwhelm.  
 By thy Law may he be guided,  
 While submissive to his nod,  
 All our safety is confided  
 In the delegate of God.  
 God, preserve, &c.

Froh erleb' er seiner Lande,  
 Seiner Völker höchsten Flor!  
 Seh' sie, Eins durch Bruder-Bande,  
 Ragen allen andern vor;  
 Und vernehme noch am Rande  
 Später Gruft der Enkel Chor:  
 /:Gott! erhalte Franz den Kaiser,  
 Unsern guten Kaiser Franz!:/

May he see his Empire flourish,  
 And his people crown'd with joy;  
 Love Fraternal may they nourish,  
 And all seeds of hate destroy!  
 May he hear his Offspring crying,  
 When on brink of distant grave,  
 (Still by supplication trying  
 To preserve him from the grave.)  
 /:God, preserve our Emp'ror Francis!  
 Sov'reign ever good and great.:/

The last two lines in the original second stanza, which are substituted by four different lines in Burney's version, may be translated freely: "Let only justice direct the decisions of his Majesty".

There are two curious stories connected with the history of the Hymn: the first concerns the original version, and the second the English version. Two days after the first performance of Haydn's Hymn, on 14th February, 1797, a rich Englishman living in Vienna paid for the wedding ceremony of twenty-four poor couples in St. Stephen's Cathedral and afterwards entertained them at Jahn's famous restaurant, where the band played the new Hymn three times. The second story which tells of an even stranger tribute to Haydn is related by the amateur English musician William Gardiner in his book *Music and Friends* (1838, Vol. I, pp. 362 f.):<sup>12</sup>

"... I had a small present that I wished to be conveyed to the great Haydn, the nature of which the following letter will explain. I sent it to Mr. Salomon, with a request that he would forward it to his friend:—

'To Joseph Haydn, Esq., Vienna.

'Sir,—For the many hours of delight which your musical compositions have afforded me, I am emboldened (although a stranger) to beg your acceptance of the enclosed small present, wrought in my factory at Leicester. It is no more than six pairs of cotton stockings, in which is worked that immortal air "God preserve the Emperor Francis", with a few other quotations from your great and original productions. Let not the sense I have of your genius be measured by the insignificance of the gift; but please to consider it as a mark of the great esteem I bear to him who has imparted so much pleasure and delight to the musical world.

I am, dear Sir, with profound respect, your most humble servant,  
 William Gardiner.

Leicester, Aug. 10, 1804.'

"The war was raging at the time, and as Mr. Salomon had no reply, we concluded it never arrived at its place of destination. . . ."

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Musical Times*, 1909, pp. 774 f.

Gardiner adds in a footnote: "The subjects quoted and wrought on the stockings, were the following:—'My mother bids me bind my hair'; the bass solo of 'The Leviathan'; the andante of the surprise sinfonia; his sonata 'Consumatum est'; and 'God preserve the Emperor'." ("The Leviathan" is from *The Creation*, "Consumatum est" from *The Seven Last Words of Our Saviour*.)

Gardiner names only five themes, so, presumably, one pair of stockings was plain—or, maybe, ornamented with a portrait of Haydn! In any case posterity would have been better served if Gardiner had woven the whole thematic catalogue of Haydn's works, which is missing to this day, into the stockings and sent them to the British Museum.

### Reviews of Music

Roy Harris. *Folk-Song Symphony* for Orchestra and Chorus of Mixed Voices. Choral Movements in Vocal Score. (G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.) 5s. 3d.

One of these days some wit will produce a mock thesis entitled *The Folk-Song Virus—its Cause and Cure*. Now would be a time for such a word, for surely the habit of dipping into the national folk-tune pool was never so prevalent as during this century. True, neither Elgar or Strauss ever availed themselves of this form of melodic overdraft, possibly because both were rich in magnificent tunes themselves. But their contemporaries, and still more of their successors have borrowed so much and so often from their anonymous predecessors as to suggest that some of them at any rate live in a chronic state of thematic poverty.

Granted, however, the legitimacy of such transactions, the result is all that matters. A loan presupposes repayment with interest, and in some of the works of Delius and Vaughan Williams (to take two native examples) the end justifies the means. Delius founded two of his best and most popular works, *Brigg Fair* and *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* on a Lincolnshire and Norwegian folk-tune respectively. His method was to retain the bare outline of the melody and make it, as Heseltine wrote of the first work "the basis of an enchanting series of harmonic variations". Vaughan Williams, on the other hand, has absorbed the idiom of folk-song so completely as to make much of even his original work sound like that of a rustic genius, to whose speech there always clings a strong savour of the soil, while his innumerable arrangements are, of course, models of their kind. In both cases ripeness is all.

Unfortunately, judging by the choral movements, which are all that are submitted for review, ripeness is not precisely the word one would apply to Roy Harris' *Folk-Song Symphony* which, if one may form an opinion from these, is rather a jejune affair. The part-writing throughout is elementary, with a liberal sprinkling of unison passages. The chromatic harmonies in the accompaniment suggest high-spirited adolescence rather than a genuinely felt modern idiom. Moreover there are passages (see first movement, p. 10, bars 1-4, and second movement, p. 5, bar 7, and p. 6, bar 8) that look like a hasty emigration from the established key to one immediately above or below, as though the orchestra were accommodating itself as best it could to vagaries of pitch on the part of the singers. And finally, is it not imposing a strain on the risible faculties of a body of singers to ask them to sing 27 consecutive bars to the words "Lawd! O Lawd!"? One can imagine an irreverent audience echoing the phrase with a slightly different sub-meaning. Altogether, this is a disappointing work for one of Roy Harris' high reputation as a composer.

C. W. O.



## *Musical Interpretation*

BY

HERBERT LICHTENTHAL

It is a strange fact, which the keen lover of music cannot ignore, and for which it is not easy to find an explanation, that the ordinary listener is prepared to overlook any shortcomings in the interpretation of music, as long as the technical side of the performance shows skill and is in no way objectionable. If the technique is brilliant and by itself impressive, he is apt to forget almost everything about interpretation, and he will, in some cases, fail to protest even against the most obvious offences against the texture of the work and the intentions of the composer. It is also strange and difficult to explain that there is only a very vague conception, even among professionals, of what interpretation of music really means; perhaps because the part it has in our musical education compared with that of the technical side of the art is generally very scanty indeed. Most of it is left to the discretion of the pupil, to his personal taste and natural instinct, which is often very limited and not sufficiently developed to secure a sensible interpretation. It seems necessary, therefore, to point out some of the most frequent faults in the interpretation of music and to examine their cause.

I wish to emphasize that this does not refer to the really great artist who, by his instinct and imagination and by his high standards of character and self-discipline, reveals an intimate knowledge of the composer's intention and gives, nearly always, a most convincing and satisfying interpretation of the work, as a whole, and in every detail.

I wish to refer to those musicians who, although possessing a high technical skill in all kinds of musical craftsmanship, betray sometimes an amazing lack of understanding of the music they try to interpret.

Since it is these men, and not the great artist—who rarely can be heard—who shape the musical mind of the average listener, it is necessary that their interpretations of the works of the great masters should be right at least in their most prominent features.

But very often one has the feeling that points of the utmost importance for the understanding of the music are kept dark. I will not decide whether the reason for this is ignorance, negligence, or simply carelessness on the part of the interpreter, but it remains a fact that the listener, in many cases, cannot make head or tail even of some of the most popular themes of our great composers, in the manner in which they are played to him.

Trying to prove this in the following examples I am conscious of the difficulty in finding agreement to the fact that the notation of our great masters

is, in many cases, chosen out of regard for simplicity and convention rather than because it always reflects exactly the idea contained and expressed in the music. This is the reason why we so often hear the notation of a work instead of its music, but it can only be remedied if we get rid of the idea that a bar-line is always a bar-line and that a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar is always a  $\frac{3}{4}$  bar.

I think the points I am mentioning are a matter of principle and not a matter of opinion; to emphasize this I have chosen my examples from some of the best known works.

I also wish to say that my statement is concerned only with music based on the principle of the co-operative function of melody, harmony and rhythm, and its intrinsic laws, as laid down in the music of the last and the beginning of this century, and not with atonal music or the music of some contemporary composers in which this principle is intentionally denied, and which has freed itself from all chains of functional law.

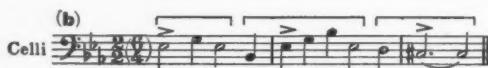
#### *Eroica. 1st Movement.*


From the whole construction of this movement it is evident that two bars always belong together and that we have not to deal with  $\frac{3}{4}$  but with  $\frac{2}{2}$  time.

This is important, for an accent on the second of each pair of  $\frac{3}{4}$  bars does not make sense. The orchestra, therefore, should not play as written (for the eye)



but for the meaning



The phrasing should be as I have marked it in B , for the ties in A are slurs and not phrasing marks. Beethoven himself says in bars 19-21 of the score (1st violins and wood) that he wants it phrased this way.



Played as it should be the theme gets quite a different character in tempo and expression from the way it is very often heard.

#### *Third Movement. Scherzo.*

The main subject (which must also be understood as  $\frac{2}{2}$  time with one bar-line always removed) is usually played as beginning with the full bar and

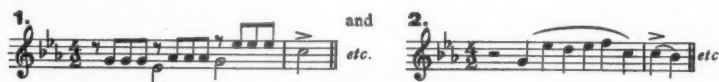
with the accent on the first note of each  $3/4$  bar. Beethoven, however, wants it to be understood as in B [bar 130 (strings and wood)]:



The phrasing as I have marked it in B gives the theme quite a different meaning from the way it is very often played.

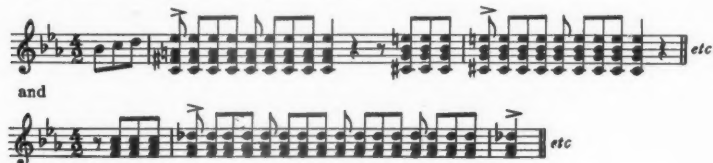
*5th Symphony. 1st Movement.*

The best way to understand this movement is, I think, as a movement in  $4/2$  time, like this



Under no circumstances should each  $2/4$  bar be taken as a real bar.

I have always been at a loss to understand why some conductors play the sudden jerk of the theme to D flat and E flat in bars 44-50 of the development and at the end of the recapitulation (just before the coda), in a manner which suggests that they read the four quavers between two bar-lines as belonging together, making complete nonsense. I think it is obvious and should not need a special explanation that Beethoven meant:



*2nd Movement.*

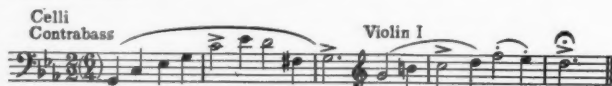
This movement offers a very good and obvious example among the multitude of cases in which the slur (bowing tie) does not coincide with the phrasing, a fact to which—as can be observed in our everyday musical practice—insufficient attention is paid, even by many professional musicians.

In the following example I leave the slurs as put by Beethoven and mark the phrasing with



*3rd Movement.*

Here again we have to deal with 2/2 time. The first, third, etc., bar lines of the 3/4 time have to be removed from our thinking and the accents have to be made, as I mark them.



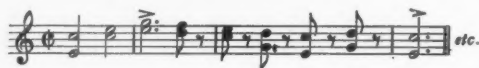
Strangely enough one hears the reminiscence of the 1st movement in the horn (bar 19), played very often with an accent on the first note of the crotchet-bar, although there cannot be the slightest doubt (according to Beethoven's intentions in the 1st movement) that this is the weak bar and the dotted minim bar the strong one, which should be accented.



The last movement, I think, must be understood as a movement in common time  $\text{C}$  and not in  $\text{c}$  as marked by Beethoven, probably for the convenience of the conductor. If there should be any doubt about this, the horn theme



makes it quite clear. The correct tempo of the movement cannot be missed if the conductor gives the  $\text{P}$  of the Allegro the same speed as the  $\text{P}$  of the last bars of the Scherzo which leads into the Allegro. Only played as  $\text{C}$  and with accents on the strong bars, the second, fourth, etc., does the movement achieve its triumphant character and lead to the climax of the whole symphony. Played as  $\text{c}$  and with the accent on the first, third, etc., bars as is often heard, the first theme sounds almost trivial.

*Sonata Pathétique. 1st Movement.*

Here I think the Allegro di Molto should be understood as a 2/1 time, with two bars taken as one. An astonishing error is usually made by playing the sixths in the third bar, E flat—C, and E natural—C as belonging together, although it is obvious that E flat—C is the end of one phrase, and E natural—C the beginning of another, as Beethoven himself shows very clearly 9 bars before the repetition-mark.

Many more examples of unintelligible reading and playing could be added, but I think the few I have mentioned are sufficient to show what I mean.

Why do such things still happen whereas we are now so advanced in all the technical aspects of music?

To my mind much of the confusion regarding the interpretation of music in our day is caused by the wrong idea of how to read music and, as I mentioned before, what notation—at least, with our classical composers—really means; what it reveals and what it hides, and how far it can be regarded as giving the key to the meaning of the music. It seems that notation is generally taken far too much at its face-value, instead of what it is meant to be—a mere fixation of sound with the help of which the meaning of the music has to be found from its coherence and texture. This is the reason why so many executants, especially orchestras (through fault of the conductor), play only the notes, and however excellently these may be played, it will not result in music, if the spirit of the work is not behind them.

Thus much harm is being done, as the average listener takes for music what is really only a brilliant execution of the notes.

Three principal errors in our musical education and practice seem to be responsible for this.

1. The slur is taken as a phrasing mark when it is not so. This error is bound to confuse the listener, as it destroys completely the sense of the music and the intentions of the composer.

2. The metre of the music—the distribution of accents in their proper weight and strength among the smaller and larger units of a musical composition—is often completely neglected. But the metre is the pulse of the music without which it has no life.

3. The (often wilful) omission of small changes in dynamics in the flow of the music, which are not specially marked by the composer, but which are natural and essential to all music.

As to 1. The composers of the classical period, Beethoven included (Brahms is more accurate), seem to give scarcely any indication as to how they want their music phrased. Their ties mostly being slurs and not phrasing marks, they seem to take it for granted that the interpreter will find the phrasing for himself from the texture of the music, which nearly always unmistakably points to the intentions of the composer in this respect. The pity is that many musicians do not take the necessary trouble.

As to 2. Here again notation usually gives no indication. Examination will show that notation in many cases is done more for the eye (to facilitate the reading) than for the ear, that the time indicated by the composer at the beginning of the work often does not tally with the real speed and pulse, immanent in the music. Bar-lines are frequently put in pure mathematical order (for the eye), sometimes even at the wrong place, without regard for the real meaning of the music, but since the main purpose of the bar-line is to indicate the incidence of accents, a distinction must be made between bar-lines which are real and essential for marking the accent of small musical units, and bar-lines which have no meaning at all and would be better removed from the printed page and the musician's memory. However, the interpreter who takes the trouble to fathom the meaning of the music will always be able to find out, from its harmonic, melodic and rhythmical construction the metre of the music.

As to 3. It must be understood by every interpreter of music that com-

posers, especially of the classical period, in most cases put expression marks only where the dynamic change is not evident from the music itself, and where the interpreter, therefore, cannot be expected to know the intention of the composer; but this does not mean that the changes, natural and indispensable to all harmonic and melodic movement of music, should not be made at all. Musicians do not seem to be always conscious of this, although its neglect is apt to extinguish the life of even the greatest masterpiece.

There are quite a few other points which deserve mentioning: syncopé, for instance. Everyone knows, or should know, that syncopé is the anticipation of an accent, but in practice very little use is made of this knowledge. Frequently one can hear syncopes played (especially in accompaniments) absolutely without meaning, with no accent at all.

Many performers fail to understand or even feel the moment of tension, the weight of expression which characterises, and is due to, the suspension note. I have heard well-known pianists play the three-tone-group of demi-semi-quavers in the slow movement of Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 10, No. 3, without realizing that the second note of this group is always a suspension note, and so missing the expression obviously intended by the composer.



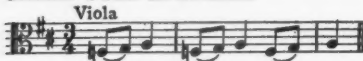
In this connection, I would like to point out the special significance which syncopation and suspension-notes have in the compositions of Brahms. The use Brahms makes of them shows clearly that for him they are an important and characteristic means of expression. No one, therefore, who does not feel this can do justice to Brahms' music. I have heard singers singing *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer*, without realising at all the suspension-character of the vocal part, with the result that little was left of the real beauty of the song.

This reminds me of another peculiarity in Brahms' music; his love for duple phrasing in a 3-time bar and for triplet phrasing in a 2-time bar.

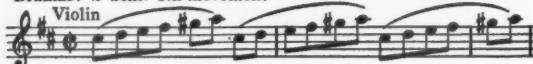
Brahms: Violin Sonata, A maj. op. 100. 1st movement



Brahms: 2 Sinf. 1st movement



Brahms: 2 Sinf. 4th movement



The idea behind it can only be the piquant effect of the musical accent falling each time on another note of the phrase. This is seldom brought out



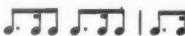
distinctly; one usually has the impression that the performer mistakes the mannerism for a change of time.



One of the worst crimes is that of "metronomical" playing or singing. Perhaps the metronome has injured music more than it has helped musicians. Considering that there are hardly two bars in a composition which have exactly the same speed, the habit of some people of disposing of a work by running through it in the manner of a mechanized time-beater is liable completely to destroy the music. It should be evident enough that to make sense and to give distinction, breathing is as indispensable to music as it is to speech.

About rhythm I would like to say that it is not enough to divide a note into several beats or to sum up correctly several notes into one beat as some people seem to think. This is elementary and not at all sufficient for the expression of even the most plain and simple musical phrase. Rhythm is the dramatic element in music. It is a continuous pendulum from weak to strong within the largest sentences and in the smallest phrases of a work of music. There are, in fact, in a musical phrase no two notes which have exactly the same strength and weight. The interpreter should, therefore, pay particular attention to considerations of rhythmic balance which in practice is often completely neglected.

It must also be said that, owing to some peculiarity in our notation, people have got into the habit of misunderstanding the nature and the meaning of a rhythmical idea. There are people who seem to think that notes (quavers, semi-quavers, etc.) tied on the same line must, therefore, belong together, although very often they have nothing in common except the line, and the musical idea separates them strongly from each other. This explains errors which sometimes change the whole meaning of the music.

It is, for instance, wrong to read the rhythm in the 1st movement of

Beethoven's 7th Symphony:  etc.

as a dactyl — . This rhythm has to be understood as an anapaest . That means that the three notes on one line do not belong together. One

should, therefore, read: not  but 

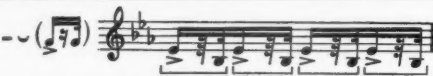
It makes all the difference in the world to the effect of this movement, whether the interpreter reads the rhythm as a dactyl or as an anapaest.

It is the same with the rhythm of the second violins, which accompanies the main-theme (first violins) in the Adagio of Beethoven's 4th Symphony.



This rhythm is, of course, to be understood as an iambus



and not as a trochee --  as it is sometimes heard.

I would also like to say that for the reasons I have mentioned, the interpretation of Bach's music, instrumental as well as vocal, is, to my mind, frequently wrong and sometimes unbelievably thoughtless.

A good deal could be said about singing in general; as many singers seem to be only, or mainly, concerned with the training of their larynx. Only very few seem to be conscious of their duties towards the composer and to take the trouble to find out what he wants to express. Many try to make up for their lack of understanding of the music, and of musical knowledge in general, by interpreting words and music according to their own feeble idea, missing most of all of what the composer really intends. So much for what I would call the "faulty interpretation of music," as we often hear it.

As regards interpretation in general I should like to say this:—

One frequently hears people say that a certain interpretation of a sonata or a symphony is the personal perception of the work by the interpreter.

I am far from denying individuality to the recreating artist, but this should not be taken as an excuse for ignorance or inequality to his task on the part of the interpreter. After satisfying the fundamental requirements of the music and carefully carrying out the intentions of the composer, there is still enough room left for the interpreter to show his individuality, his temperament, and his power of imagination. I cannot see how any interpretation of music can fail to reveal the individuality of the interpreter, however great or poor it may be.

But it must be kept in mind that it is not left to the interpreter to decide when and where a *crescendo* or a *ritardando* should be made. This has been laid down by the composer in the music. It is, however, left to the interpreter, how to make the *crescendo* and the *ritardando*, and it is here that he can show his individuality and the whole compass of his feeling.

I do not pretend that the points I have mentioned contain anything new. They have been laid down by several writers on music and, as they are fundamental, they should be known by everybody who has had a good musical education; but our observation shows that they are not respected in practice. As proof that they are most important and, in fact, decisive for any interpretation of music may be cited the really great artists, who consciously or instinctively never commit an offence against these fundamental principles. The trouble is, I think, that ever since music became an industry and so many people's business, quantity seems to oust quality and artists often do not take the trouble to study the work in all its aspects deeply enough to secure an interpretation which does justice to it. They are abetted, in a way, by the public, who are generally so impressed by the technical brilliance of the performance that they seem to be satisfied with this alone.

If there is going to be a new way of living after this war, music must not be excluded from it. A new approach to the art, as the most subtle and sublime language of the human soul, must be found by the interpreter and by the listener.



## Lorenzo da Ponte in London

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF HIS LITERARY ACTIVITY, 1793-1804

BY

ALFRED LOEWENBERG

LORENZO DA PONTE needs no introduction to readers of THE MUSIC REVIEW, or of any music review, for that matter. The name of the author of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte* is linked with Mozart's glory for all times. In comparison, everything else he achieved during his long and chequered career seems insignificant. He himself, towards the end of his life, was obviously well aware of the part to be allotted to him by posterity. When *Don Giovanni* was first produced in New York in 1826, Da Ponte, then in his 78th year and professor of Italian literature at Columbia College, contributed a short preface to the printed book of words in which he says:

"Le parole di questi drammi sono state scritte da me. Lascio assai volentieri a quel Genio immortale tutta la Gloria che gli si deve per produzioni tanto mirabili: mi sia permesso solo sperare che qualche picciolo raggio di questa gloria ricada su me, per avergli prestati i veicoli di sì permanenti tesori, co' miei fortunati poemi. (The words of these dramas were written by me. All the glory due to such miraculous works I gladly leave to that immortal genius. I merely beg to be allowed to hope that some little ray of that glory may fall upon me for having provided, with my fortunate poems, the vehicles for such eternal treasures.)"

About the same time Da Ponte wrote and published his famous *Memorie* (New York, 1823-27), which remain the chief source for his life. They have been frequently reprinted since and are available in modern Italian, English, French and German editions. They make very instructive and amusing reading even to-day when many of the characters portrayed therein have faded into oblivion, and give a vivid and colourful picture of 18th century life in Venice, Vienna and London in its political, social and theatrical aspects. They must be taken, however, with a grain of salt where actual facts and their chronological sequence are concerned, and in such cases need checking from independent sources.

Da Ponte spent the greater part of his life in three great capitals. Whereas there have been published reliable accounts of his activity both in Vienna<sup>1</sup> and New York,<sup>2</sup> his London period has been strangely neglected by historians. In fact, so far nothing whatever has been written on that subject besides the more or less extensive notes and comments made by the modern editors of his *Memoirs*. With the notable exception of L. A. Sheppard<sup>3</sup> (who

<sup>1</sup> H. Boas, *Lorenzo da Ponte als Wiener Theaterdichter*, Sammelbände der Internationalen Musik-Gesellschaft, Vol. 15 (1913-14).

<sup>2</sup> H. E. Krehbiel, *Music and Manners in the Classical Period*, 1898. (Chapter on Da Ponte in New York.)

<sup>3</sup> *Memoirs of Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart's Librettist*, translated by L. A. Sheppard, 1929.

took the trouble to verify some of Da Ponte's statements from newspapers and other sources), they are full of mistakes and wholly unreliable. No wonder then that incorrect reports have crept into many dictionaries and encyclopaedias, including such standard works of reference as the *American Dictionary of Biography*. The only existing attempt at a complete bibliography of Da Ponte's writings, by Gustav Gugitz,<sup>4</sup> is very useful for the early period, including that of Vienna, but utterly insufficient as far as London is concerned.

We need not go into details concerning Da Ponte's activity at Vienna. It may, however, be of interest to append here a short list of the libretti he wrote for the Imperial Court, as it is nowhere else available in condensed form, and as several of them occur later in London.

- Dec. 14, 1783. *L'Ifigenia in Tauride*, music by Gluck (translation from Guillard's French libretto).
- Dec. 6, 1784. *Il Ricco d'un Giorno*, music by Salieri.
- Jan. 4, 1786. *Il Burbero di buon Cuore*, music by Vicente Martin y Soler (from Goldoni's comedy *Le Bourru bienfaisant*).
- Feb. 20, 1786. *Il finto Cieco*, music by Gazzaniga.
- May 1, 1786. *Le Nozze di Figaro*, music by Mozart.
- July 12, 1786. *Il Demogorgone ovvero Il Filosofo confuso*, music by Vincenzo Righini.
- Nov. 17, 1786. *Una Cosa rara, o sia Bellezza ed Onestà*, music by Martin y Soler.
- Dec. 27, 1786. *Gli Equivoci*, music by Storace.
- June 22, 1787. *Il Bertoldo*, music by Francesco Piccchio.
- Oct. 1, 1787. *L'Arbore di Diana*, music by Martin y Soler.
- Oct. 29, 1787 (at Prague; at Vienna May 7, 1788). *Il Dissoluto punito o sia il D. Giovanni*, music by Mozart.
- Jan. 8, 1788. *Axur, Re d'Ormus*, music by Salieri (adaptation of Beaumarchais' *Tarare*).
- Sept. 10, 1788. *Il Talismano*, music by Salieri (adaptation of an earlier libretto, of the same title, by Goldoni).
- Feb. 11, 1789. *Il Pastor fido*, music by Salieri.
- Feb. 27, 1789. *L'Ape musicale*, pasticcio.
- Dec. 11, 1789. *La Cifra*, music by Salieri (adaptation of an earlier libretto by Petrosellini called *La Dama Pastorella*).
- Jan. 26, 1790. *Così fan tutte o sia La Scuola degli Amanti*, music by Mozart.
- April 13, 1790. *Nina o sia La Pazza per Amore*, music by Paisiello and Weigl (translation from the French of Marsollier).
- Aug. 13, 1790. *La Quakera spiritosa*, music by Guglielmi (alteration of a libretto by Giuseppe Palomba).
- Sept. 15, 1790. *La Caffettiera bizzarra*, music by Weigl.
- Jan. 17, 1791. *Flora e Minerva*, cantata, music by Weigl (performed at Prince Auersperg's).
- March 11, 1791. *Il Davide*, oratorio, composer unknown.
- March 23, 1791. *L'Ape musicale rinnuovata*, pasticcio, second version of the one performed in 1789; given at Trieste, Jan. 24, 1792, with the sub-title *Il Poeta Impresario*.

Da Ponte lost his Vienna position in 1791. Furnished with letters of introduction to Marie Antoinette he intended to seek his fortune in Paris. On the way, however, the news of the Queen's imprisonment reached him and he decided to go to London instead, bearing in mind the advice given to him by his friend Casanova some time before. He arrived in London for the first

<sup>4</sup> Appendix to his German edition of the *Memoirs*, Dresden, 1924.

time in October, 1792, took lodgings at No. 7, Silver Street, Golden Square, and at once got in touch with musical and theatrical circles. There were many of his former Viennese acquaintances in London then, e.g. Michael Kelly, Stephen Storace and his sister Nancy, the singer Carlo Rovedino, etc. But in spite of his good connections, Da Ponte did not succeed then in finding a suitable position. At that time the official poet to the Opera was one Carlo Francesco Badini who at once scented a rival and seems to have done a fair share of intriguing.

Da Ponte's first stay in London lasted only about eight months and occupies but a few pages in his *Memoirs*. He intended to publish a weekly called *La Bilanzia teatrale*, but nothing came of it as the printing costs were too high. "Non è possibile credere quanto è cara la stampa in questa Città" (letter to Casanova, 2nd April, 1793). For the singer Elisabeth Mara he altered an old tragedy of his into an opera libretto of which no trace remains. The only work published during his first stay was

*Il Tributo del Core*, Poesie di Lorenzo da Ponte Poeta per dieci Anni dell' Imperatore Giuseppe II di F. M. dedicate al Signor Duca di Choiseul e pubblicate in Londra dall' Autore dopo la Morte di Luigi XVI.

Londra, M. Stace, 1793, pp. 32, 8vo.

A copy, formerly belonging to Casanova exists or existed at the castle of Dux (Duchcov), in Czechoslovakia, where the old adventurer spent the last years of his life as Count Waldstein's librarian. There was an immediate sequel to Da Ponte's first London publication: a venomous lampoon by Badini, called *Il Tributo della Coglionatura* ("The Tribute of Hoax"), published under the *nom-de-guerre* Vittorio Nemesini and "dedicated to the author of *Il Tributo del Core* or the incredible not less than incomparable merit of Abate L. Da Ponte," full of gross abuse and violent and indelicate attacks.

Badini seems to have anticipated that Da Ponte was soon to become his successor. Exactly how the strings were pulled we do not know. Without the slightest hope of ever finding employment at the King's Theatre—or so he writes—Da Ponte left in June, 1793, for Belgium and Holland. But as early as November he received a letter offering him Badini's post at a salary of 200 guineas and he returned to London instantly.

The old King's Theatre in the Haymarket, Sir John Vanbrugh's structure of 1705, had been burned down on the night of 17th June, 1789. The company took refuge first at Covent Garden, later at the Little Haymarket Theatre, and finally, in February, 1791, at the Pantheon in Oxford Street, a concert hall converted into a theatre. One year later (14th January, 1792) this also met with the fate of nearly every 18th century theatrical building and once more the singers were rendered homeless. The score of *Semiramide*, the first and not yet performed opera of the Czech composer, Adalbert Gyrowetz, friend of Haydn and, later, of Beethoven, perished in the flames of the Pantheon.

Meanwhile a new King's Theatre was erected on the site of the old building, the work of the Polish architect Michael Nowozicki ("Novocelleschi," as he was mostly called after the Italian fashion of the time; died at Ramsgate in

1795), who had been James Wyatt's assistant at the building of the Pantheon, and, from 1780 onwards, had intermittently held the post of painter and machinist to the opera-house.

The new King's Theatre was ready in the beginning of 1791, and was about to be opened (with the opera *Pirro*, by Paisiello) at the same time as the Pantheon; the Lord Chamberlain, however, refused the licence to the second Italian company, and only "entertainments of music and dancing" were allowed to be given. After the burning of the Pantheon, and some more make-shift performances at the Little Haymarket Theatre, the King's Theatre was finally inaugurated as the new home of Italian opera in London on 26th January, 1793, with a revival of Paisiello's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. This was to be the scene of Da Ponte's activities for the next twelve years.

The proprietor of the opera-house was a certain William Taylor, who, according to John Ebers, "had all Sheridan's deficiency of financial management, without that extraordinary man's resources". Two great singers who had been famous on the London stage for several years left just before Da Ponte's time: Gasparo Pacchierotti, a celebrated castrato, and Elisabeth Mara. No proper successor was found for the former; the period of the male sopranos and contraltos, the delight of opera audiences all over Europe for a century and a half, was about to pass, for ever, save for a short revival in the 1820's. Even so, some castratos were engaged at the King's Theatre after Pacchierotti, such as Domenico Bruni, and Agrippino Rosselli, who continued to sing until 1800. But none of them was of great prominence, and in the year 1796 the tenor—in this case Giuseppe Viganoni—was finally established as the leading singer.

Mara's place was taken by Brigitta Giorgi Banti, a prima donna then at the zenith of her fame, with all the accomplishments and faults of her species. At the same time a new prima donna buffa was engaged, Anna Morichelli, equally famous if not quite as cunning as Banti. They both arrived in the packet boat from Spain at Plymouth in April, 1794, when the season was already well advanced. Their salary had been fixed at £1400 each as we learn from an anonymous pamphlet called *Opera House*, by "Veritas" (no date, but published about 1797), which also gives the following figures: Viganoni (tenor), £1000; Rosselli (male soprano) and Giovanni Morelli (buffo), £800 each; Bianchi (composer) and Carlo Rovedino (bass), £600 each; Cramer, Viotti and Salomon (leaders), £300 each; Federici (conductor, at the cembalo), £350; Dragonetti (double bass), £250; Dauberval, Noverre and D'Egville (ballet masters), £600 each; Marinari (painter), £300; Sestini (tailor), £200 or £250; Cabanal (machinist), £150; Jewel (treasurer), £300. The salaries of the dancers varied between £1000 and £600, the band received £50 per night. Da Ponte's salary is given as £250, but he also "had the perquisite of the opera books, estimated at £500 per annum".

The account of the years which followed takes up a considerable part of Da Ponte's *Memoirs*. But we learn comparatively little about the work he actually did. We hear of the singers' jealousies and of the composers' intrigues, of love affairs and literary squabbles, and over and over again of money matters

and financial difficulties, Taylor's and his own. It is not easy to form, from all the paraphernalia of anecdotes, a true picture of what the London operatic repertory of these years really was like and what actual part Da Ponte took in it. Nor are the contemporary accounts of the London stage, of which there are many, of any help. Several of them deal to a greater extent with the Italian operas; but they are mainly concerned with the singers only, rarely perhaps with the composers; Da Ponte's name is never even mentioned. We have to fall back upon the newspaper advertisements and reviews, upon the printed music of the operas (at that period in most cases a few favourite airs only), and upon the printed books of words, the librettos, which generally served as playbills and give the cast and other details.

The season of 1794 started on the 11th of January with the first London production of Cimarosa's *Il Matrimonio segreto*, which after its immense success in Vienna in 1792 had just begun to penetrate into all European countries. The libretto was written by Giovanni Bertati, Da Ponte's successor as poet to the Imperial Theatre at Vienna and one of his best-hated adversaries. In the *Memoirs* there is an amusing account of a visit paid by him to Bertati in Vienna when he found the new poet working with many books on both sides of his manuscript which he tried to hide when the visitor entered. Da Ponte could just make out the titles of the books on the right hand side: they were a volume of French comedies, a rhyming dictionary, an Italian grammar, etc. On the other hand, it is a well established fact that Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni* libretto owes a good deal to Bertati's *Don Giovanni Tenorio o sia Il Convitato di Pietra* (set to music by Gazzaniga and produced at Venice eight months before Mozart's opera was first given at Prague).

The case of *Il Matrimonio segreto* is even worse; for the London libretto says

*La (sic) Matrimonio secreto. . . . The Music by the Celebrated Signor Cimarosa, Under the Direction of Mr. Federici. Poete, Mr. L. Da Ponte. The translation, By Mr. John Mazzinghi.*

This wording is very misleading indeed, to say the least. It may be that Da Ponte simply wanted to establish the fact of his new appointment as poet to the King's Theatre. But to any reader and critic of that time this title-page must have given the impression that Da Ponte actually was the author of the words, an impression which may or may not have been intended. His first real work began with the next production on

Feb. 1, 1794.

*I Contadini Bizzarri*, A new Comic Opera, to be performed at the King's Theatre, Hay-Market. The music by the Celebrated Mr. Sarti, Under the Direction of Mr. Federici, Poete, Mr. L. Da Ponte. Translated by Mr. John Mazzinghi.

London, C. Clarke, n.d., pp. (15)—56, 8vo.

The words by Signor N—, with additions and alterations by the Poet of this Theatre. The necessity of pleasing the Publick, and want of time, renders it expedient to deviate from the usual mode of Printing this Opera.

This last mysterious remark simply means that the original Italian words were left out altogether, leaving only the English translation. This applies, however, to the first act only; those responsible then changed their minds, and the

second act was printed in the usual way, with Italian and English words on opposite pages.

This is a condensed two-act version of Sarti's *Le Gelosie Villane*, first produced in Venice in 1776 and first heard in London, under the original title, on April 15, 1784. The original was in 3 acts; Signor N., the original author, was Tommaso Grandi. One of Da Ponte's additions was the song *Donne, Donne, voi siete un buon mobile* (an anticipation of *La Donna è mobile*), composed by Carlo Pozzi and published separately in the same year.

March 1 (not 8), 1794.

*Il Capriccio Drammatico*, A Comic Opera in One Act. The Music By Signor Dom. Cimarosa; under the Direction of Mr. Federici. The Words by Mr. —; With many Additions and Alterations by Mr. D. Ponte, Poet of this Theatre. The Translation by Mr. John Mazzinghi.

London, C. Clarke, n.d., pp. 43 [recte, 83], 8vo. On pp. 18-43:

*Il Don Giovanni*, A Tragi-Comic Opera in One Act. The Music by Messrs. Gazzaniga, Sarti, Federici, and Guglielmi. The Words are new, by L. Da Ponte, Poet of this Theatre, Except those that are not marked with inverted Commas.

For all the details of this curious production the reader must turn to the *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* of 1887, where Handel's biographer, Chrysander, published a lengthy paper on the relation between Gazzaniga's and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* operas. Here we need only state that the London *Capriccio Drammatico* has nothing to do with Gazzaniga's opera of the same title (Venice, 1787), but is derived from Cimarosa's farce *Il Credulo* (Naples, 1786, original words by Giuseppe Maria Diodati). As to the *Don Giovanni* pasticcio, the second part of the evening's bill, it is possible that besides the four composers mentioned, some of Mozart's music was heard; for the words of *Madamina* occur in the London libretto (as Richard Capell pointed out in the *Daily Telegraph* some years ago). The following little account which Da Ponte himself gave thirty years later, is, I think, unknown; it is to be found in the libretto of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* as produced for the first time in America at the Park Theatre, New York, May 23, 1826:

"L'anno 1796 (*sic*) portai a Londra, ed offersi alla Direzione del teatro italiano il mio *Don Giovanni*. Eran allora acting Managers il Signor Michele Kelly, e il Signor V. Federici. Questi due sapientissimi Personaggi, diedero invece la preferenza al *Don Giovanni* di Gazzaniga!!! Poco mancò, che i Signori Inglesi non ismantellassero quel teatro!!! Questo onorevole aneddottuccio non trovò loco nelle remeniscenze di M. Kelly di poca memoria!"

Nothing of the sort happened as far as is known. There could have been no scandal on that account as Mozart's opera (not produced in London until 1817) was then completely unknown here save perhaps to some connoisseurs. But all the same, the *Don Giovanni* medley was not a success and was replaced after two performances, on March 18, by

*La Bella Pescatrice*, A Comic Opera of One Act, as represented at the King's Theatre, Haymarket. With many Additions and Alterations by Mr. D. Ponte, Poet of this Theatre. The Translation by Mr. John Mazzinghi.

London, C. Clarke, n.d., pp. 17 [recte, 31], 8vo.

This was a well-known comic opera by Pietro Guglielmi, very successful all over Europe since its first production in Naples in 1789. It had been heard in



London before, at the Pantheon in 1791, in two acts as originally written (by Saverio Zini).

April 26, 1794.

*La Semiramide*: A Musical Drama. As represented at the King's Theatre, Haymarket. The Subjects and Incidents of this Drama were taken from Voltaire's celebrated Tragedy of Semiramis. The Words by Mr. \*\*\*. With many Alterations and Additions by Lorenzo Da Ponte, Poet of this Theatre.

London, C. Clarke, 1794, pp. 25 [recte, 47], 8vo.

The name of the composer, Francesco Bianchi, is not mentioned in this edition. The opera originally was called *La Vendetta di Nino* and had been first produced at Naples in 1790. The original author was Ferdinando Moretti and he in turn had used Melchior Cesarotti's Italian translation of Voltaire's tragedy. Brigitta Banti chose this work (written for her at Naples) for her London debut. The Assyrian queen was one of her best parts and the opera had many revivals.

The manuscript score (acting copy) of the London version of *Semiramide* has been preserved in the British Museum. But only two numbers, as far as I am aware, appeared in print, and they are not by Bianchi. One air, *A compir già vo l'impresa* (which occurs in Act II, Scene 5), is attributed in the British Museum Catalogue to Pietro Carlo Guglielmi, the younger. The title-page, however, simply says "by Signor Guglielmi", and in fact the air is taken from the elder Pietro Guglielmi's oratorio *Debora e Sisara*, which was written for Banti at Naples in 1788 and performed by her also in London, Feb. 20, 1795. The second printed air of *Semiramide*, of which there is a copy at the Brussels Conservatoire, was composed by the singer Agrippino Rosselli, to show off his own abilities. (His soprano part, Arsace, was in later revivals taken by the tenor, Kelly, in 1795, and Viganoni in 1798; the original tenor part in this opera, Seleuco, was taken by the bass, Carlo Rovedino, as in 1794 no tenor was available at the King's Theatre.)

May 17, 1794.

*Il Burbero di Buon Core*: A Comic Opera in Two Acts. As represented at the King's Theatre, Haymarket. The Music by the celebrated Signor Vincenzo Martini, under the Direction of Mr. Federici. The Words by Lorenzo Da Ponte, Poet of this Theatre.

London, C. Clarke, n.d., pp. 41 [recte, 79], 8vo.

This was the first quasi-original work of Da Ponte produced in this season. The libretto is founded on Goldoni's comedy, *Le Bourru bienfaisant* (originally written in French) and had been first produced at Vienna in 1786. Martin's opera was chosen for Anna Morichelli's London debut. As the composer was not expected in London until the next season, the singers could afford to take some liberties with the original music as several published numbers show. Morichelli introduced two songs by Vittorio Trento and by G. G. Ferrari (copies in the British Museum) and the buffo Morelli one by Carlo Pozzi (mentioned in the review) and both singers excelled in a duet of more illustrious parentage: Haydn's.

Duetto: *Quel cor umano e tenero*, Sung by Sigr. Morelli & Siga. Morichelli, at the

King's Theatre Haymarket in the Opera of *Il Burbero di buon Cuore*. The Words by Sigr. Da Ponte.

London, Corri & Dussek, n.d., folio.

There is no copy of the original edition of this duet (which occurs in Act II, Scene 3) in the British Museum. I quote from the catalogue of the Brussels Conservatoire (No. 4176). Was this merely an adaptation of some earlier work, or a new composition? Considering that Haydn was in London at that time, knew all the singers and was a frequent visitor to the King's Theatre, I am inclined to think that he wrote the piece expressly for the occasion, perhaps at Morichelli's request. The critic of *The Oracle* went out of his way to draw special attention to it: "... Of the music, what was in the best possible style was a Duo between Morelli and Morichelli, written by the excellent Haydn".

This little contribution of Haydn's to the London stage has escaped the diligent researches of C. F. Pohl, and I do not find it mentioned anywhere else. At Haydn's last London benefit concert, one year later (May 4, 1795) a duet was performed with great success by the same two singers, and although the title is not mentioned it seems likely that it was the one from *Il Burbero*. In 1901 it was arranged for piano in a series of "Classical Treasures" by one Edouard Dorn, and this edition is listed in the British Museum Catalogue under the heading *Haydn: Doubtful and Spurious Works*, no doubt because it is somewhat cryptically styled "Duet from *Il Burbero*". It is to be hoped that now that some light has been thrown upon its origin and pedigree, the little piece will be restored to its place among the master's genuine works. It is a curious coincidence that Haydn wrote an additional number for the same opera for which Mozart had written two airs in 1789.

May 29, 1794.

*La Serva Padrona*, Paisiello's one-act opera written on the same libretto, by Gennaro Antonio Federico, as Pergolesi's famous intermezzo of 1773.

It was produced for Banti's benefit and Da Ponte contributed for the occasion a "Sonetto, di Lesbonico Pegasio, Pastor Arcade, per la Signora B. Banti". It is printed in the book of words and begins *Dimmi io dissi ad Amor, e chi è costei*. . . . It is completely unknown as is the one he wrote for the rival prima donna, Anna Morichelli, for the day of her benefit.

June 5, 1794.

*La Frascatana*: A Comic Opera in Two Acts. As represented at The King's Theatre, Haymarket, June 5, 1794, for the benefit of Signora Anna Morichelli. The Music by Sig. Paisiello, under the Direction of Mr. Federici. With Additions and Alterations by L. Da Ponte, Poet of this Theatre.

London, C. Clarke, n.d., pp. 34 [recte, 64], 8vo.

On p. 3: Sonetto di Lesbonico Pegasio, Pastor Arcade, per La Signora Anna Morichelli (begins *Quando or gravi, or acute, or lente, or preste*. . .).

Paisiello's *La Frascatana* had been first produced in Venice in 1774 and was first heard in London two years later. Da Ponte's alterations are considerable. He reduced the opera from three to two acts and added some new lyrics. One of them, the rondo, *Non temer mio bel tesoro*, was composed by Domenico Corri and published by his firm in full score.

June 23, 1794.

*La Vittoria*, cantata by Paisiello, performed in honour of Lord Howe's victory of the "Glorious First of June", sung by Brigitta Banti "in the character of the Goddess of Victory, accompanied with chorusses".

The libretto of this was probably not printed and Da Ponte is not mentioned in the advertisements; there is, however, no reason to doubt his own statement that he was the author. Probably he fitted new words to some existing music of Paisiello's, perhaps to one of the numerous cantatas that composer had written for Banti at Naples before she came to London.

The season came to a close on July 8. The summary of Da Ponte's activity is not very impressive; six adaptations of other people's operas and but one original work which was new only to London. Still, comparing it with the absolute blank shown for the year 1794 in Gustav Gugitz's bibliography, it can be seen that he was not altogether idle. To the same year belongs a publication connected with Da Ponte indirectly:

*Lamento di Maria Antonietta, Regina di Francia.* Cantata per Musica a Voce sola e Cori. Dedicata con Permissione a Sua Altezza Reale la Duchessa di York.

Londra, Giovanni Sivrac etc., 1794. 4to.

La Musica è del Sig. Agrippino Rosselli. La Poesia è del Sig. S. Buonaiuti. . . . I Versi virgolati son presi da una Poesia stampata del Sig. Lorenzo Da Ponte, attual Poeta dell' Opera Italiana.

The score of this cantata was printed by Thomas Skillern at the same time. Da Ponte's poem is, of course, his *Il Tributo del Core* of 1793. Serafino Buonaiuti was to become his successor at the King's Theatre some years later. The composer, Agrippino Rosselli, we have met before.

The season of 1795 started on Dec. 6, 1794, with a revival of Paisiello's *L'Amore contrastato ossia La Molinarella*, under the direction of Federici. To relieve him, the famous violinist Giovanni Battista Viotti, a refugee from revolutionary France, took over the direction of some of the operas. There followed Anfossi's *Zenobia in Palmira* on Dec. 20 and a revival of Paisiello's *I Zingari in Fiera* on Jan. 10, 1795. Meanwhile the composer Vicente Martin y Soler had arrived from Russia on the invitation of Michael Kelly, in order to contribute two new operas to the repertory of the King's Theatre. Da Ponte claims in a letter to Casanova that Martin had made it a condition that he was to provide the librettos. And this may well have been the truth as Martin owed the three great successes of his life, *Il Burbero*, *Una Cosa rara* and *L'Arbore di Diana* (all written for Vienna) to his collaboration with Da Ponte. The first of the new operas was produced on

Jan. 27, 1795.

*La Scuola de Maritati.* A comic opera in two Acts. . . .

The libretto was certainly printed; but there is no copy in the British Museum and I have never come across one. We know, however, all the details from several reprints (including two for London, 1798 and 1801, see below), from the advertisements, and from the music of which six numbers (3 airs and 3 duets) were published by J. Dale in the same year. The chief part of the capricious wife, Ciprigna, was written for and taken by Anna Morichelli, while

Morelli, Rovedino, and three new members of the company, Brida, Cipriani and Bonfanti sang the male parts and Signora Pastorelli was the seconda donna. The plot is not taken from *The Taming of the Shrew* as has been stated.

The opera was not a great success in London; but it had a very distinguished career on the Continent and was later published in a German vocal score. From 1795 onwards it was given all over Italy and in Italian also at Dresden, Vienna, Madrid, Lisbon, Prague, and Paris, under various titles as *La Capricciosa corretta*, *Gli Sposi in Contrasto* and *La Moglie corretta*. Owing to these alternative titles, and to the fact that it was first produced in London—*terra incognita* for most continental historians—there is a pile of wrong statements in all dictionaries and books of reference. The muddle I think started with Fétis, who claimed that Martin had written this opera for Russia (where it was never given).

It should be noted that *La Scuola de Maritati* was produced two months before the serious opera, Bianchi's *Aci e Galatea* (libretto by Foppa) which followed on March 21,<sup>5</sup> in contrast to what Da Ponte tells us in his *Memoirs*. After another comic opera, Paisiello's *Il Conte ridicolo* (April 14), Brigitta Banti chose a work by Gluck for her next appearance: *Alceste, ossia Il Trionfo dell' Amor conjugale* (April 30), which was then produced for the first time in London, in a reduced two-act version for which Da Ponte seems to have been responsible. Alceste's air, *Se pur cara è a me la vita*, was taken over from the French version (*Je n'ai jamais chéri la vie*) and was published with the remark: "This is the only Edition with the Words by Sigr. Da Ponte, as sung by Sigr. Banti".

May 14 brought a new opera by the Venetian composer Giovanni Battista Cimarosa called *Ati e Cibebe* ("never performed upon any public stage, but composed for the private theatre of a Nobleman in Venice", viz. for that of Count Alessandro Pepoli who had written the words), and a fortnight later Martin's second comic opera followed:

May 26, 1795.

*L'Isola del Piacere*, or, *The Island of Pleasure*. A new comic opera in two acts. . . .

This title is taken from a reprint of 1801. Again, as in the case of *La Scuola de' Maritati*, the original libretto of 1795 has disappeared. Morichelli sang the part of Amalina and was supported by Brida, Morelli, Rovedino, and Cipriani, and, this time, Michael Kelly in the part of Micheletto, who certainly was so named in his honour. Six numbers of the music (three airs, two duets and one trio) were published by Dale. *L'Isola del Piacere* was not very successful in London either.<sup>6</sup> But again it has a respectable record of continental productions and was even translated into Spanish, German (two different versions) and Hungarian. On the second night, May 28, according to the advertisements an intermezzo was introduced for the composer's benefit,

<sup>5</sup> Haydn was present at the third performance on March 28.

<sup>6</sup> Haydn's comment in his diary was *L'Isola del Piacere* von Martin, die Overture war von *Arbore di Diana*, eine Menge alts gezeug von *Cosa rara*; und Er machte ein sehr schlechtes *Benefice*.

called *Le Nozze de Contadini Spagnuoli*, with music by Martin y Soler, for which no doubt Da Ponte wrote the words; the libretto probably was never printed.

It may as well be stated that an opera, "*La Didone*, tradotta dal Francese con la musica del Sig. Maestro Piccini", which is mentioned as a work by Da Ponte in Formenti's *Indice de' Spettacoli teatrali* was never produced in London either in 1795 or at any time. It is not even known that Piccini's *Didon* (French text by Marmontel, Paris, 1783) was ever translated into Italian at all.

To the year 1795 also belongs the following publication:

Six Italian Canzonetts with English Translations adapted to the Music with an Accompaniement for the Piano-Forte or Harp. Composed and dedicated to Miss Miller. By Vincenzo Martini Composer of the Italian Operas at the King's Theater Haymarket. The Italian by Del Ponte, the English by W. R. Lawrence.

Printed for Corri Dussek & Co., n.d., folio.

This was published presumably in the summer; Martin then went back to Russia, after various quarrels with Da Ponte and some rather unpleasant love affairs the account of which may be read in the *Memoirs*.

The principal changes of the next season, 1796, were the re-engagement of a new *primo uomo*, the tenor Giuseppe Viganoni,<sup>7</sup> and the appearance of a new *prima donna buffa*. Anna Morichelli, not satisfied with her London success, went back to Italy, taking with her copies of Da Ponte's and Martin's new operas; she was succeeded by Orsola Fabrizzi Bertini. The season opened with a new adaptation by Da Ponte, on

Dec. 12, 1795.

*La Bella Arsene*, An Heroic Opera, in Three Acts; As performed at The King's Theatre, in the Haymarket. Improved by Laurence Da Ponte, Poet to the Theatre. The English Translation by Mr. John Mazzinghi, Teacher of the Italian Language. Some selected Pieces of Music are taken from the Original of Mr. Grétry (!), and the Rest is entirely new, Composed by Mr. Joseph Mazzinghi; The Choruses under the Direction of Mr. Kelly.

London, W. Glindon, 1795, pp. 91, 8vo.

The slip on the title-page, attributing the original music of *La belle Arsène* to Grétry instead of Monsigny, the real composer, is typical of an age which showed not the slightest consideration to the work of a musician, especially an opera composer, unless he was himself on the spot to guard his interests. The score published by G. Goulding about the same time did slightly better by retaining three pieces by "Moncéni"; besides, it contains six numbers by Mazzinghi and one composed by the singer Agrippino Rosselli. There followed revivals of Banti's favourite bravura pieces, Bianchi's *Semiramide* and Gluck's *Alceste*; on Feb. 9 an earlier work of Bianchi's, *Piramo e Tisbe*; on Feb. 16 a new (for London) opera by Cimarosa, *I Traci amanti* (debut Signora Fabrizzi). On March 15, for Viganoni's debut, *I due Gobbi*, by the Portuguese composer Marcos Portugal, with additional airs by Paer and Süssmayr (all three

<sup>7</sup> He had been heard in secondary parts in London as far back as 1781.

composers introduced to London for the first time). Then Da Ponte got busy again:

April 7, 1796.

*Ifigenia in Tauride*, A Serious Opera, in Two Acts. The Music by Gluck. As represented at the King's Theatre, Hay-Market. Translated from (*sic*) Mr. L. Da Ponte Poet of this Theatre.

London, W. Glindon, 1796, pp. x, 27 [recte, 55], 8vo. (On pp. iii-x: Prolegomena to the Lyric Tragedy of *Iphigenia in Tauride*).

Banti was Iphigenia, Viganoni—Orestes, Rosselli—Pylades, and Rovedino—Thoas. This was not a new work even in the Italian translation, which originally had been done (in 4 acts) for Vienna in 1783. In fact it had been Da Ponte's first contribution to the Vienna operatic stage. Of the music of this Italian version only one song, *O gran dea (O toi qui prolongeas mes jours)* was published in London. The opera was produced for Banti's benefit.

May 24, 1796.

*Antigona*: A New Serious Opera, in Two Acts. To be performed at the King's Theatre, Hay-Market. The Music, Composed, here, by Bianchi.

London, W. Glindon, 1796, pp. 25 [recte, 47], 8vo.

Da Ponte is not mentioned in the libretto. That he was the author we can deduce from the publication of

*Non piangete*. A Favorite Song, as sung . . . by Madame Banti in . . . *Antigona* composed by Mr. Bianchi. The Words by L. Daponte.

London, L. Lavenue, n.d., folio.

The same libretto was used in Venice some years later with new music by Francesco Basilj, and was then styled "Dramma del Teatro Inglese, ridotto & accresciuto dal Sig. Gaetano Rossi".

June 14, 1796.

*Il Tesoro*, Opera buffa in two Acts, composed by Mazzinghi.

This opera seems to have completely disappeared, apart from the manuscript of the libretto which is in the Larpent Collection at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. That it was written by Da Ponte we know from his *An Extract from the Life of Lorenzo Da Ponte* . . ., New York, 1819, the forerunner of the *Memoirs*.

July 23, 1796.

*Zemira e Azore*. Comic Opera by Grétry, which was produced for Viganoni's benefit and in which Braham made his debut on the Italian stage on Nov. (not Sept.) the 26th following.

Again, I was unable to find a libretto of this; it is possible that it was not printed. Da Ponte, in the *Memoirs*, tells a long story about his new translation of Marmontel's *Zémire et Azor* and makes more of a fuss over it than he does over any other of his works. What he does not mention is that the opera was by no means new to London and that there were already two printed translations available, one by Mattia Verazi (Haymarket, Feb. 23, 1779), and another, altered by Carlo Francesco Badini (Haymarket, March 8, 1781); printed copies of both are in the British Museum. The well-known antagonism, even hatred, between Badini and Da Ponte probably accounts for the details of *Zemira e Azore* in the *Memoirs*.



The season of 1797 was marked by the first appearance of John Braham in Italian opera and by the re-appearance of Nancy Storace,<sup>8</sup> at that time his mistress; Banti still was the heroine. It started on Nov. 26 with *Zemira e Azore*, and continued on Dec. 6, 1796, with an opera by Guglielmi, *L'Amor fra le Vendemmie* (text by Palomba, Naples, 1792). Then followed a new work by Da Ponte on

Dec. 20, 1796.

*Il Consiglio imprudente*, a new comic opera in one act, the music entirely new, and composed here by Bianchi. The poetry by Mr. Daponte.

I quote the advertisement. Neither printed libretto nor score seems to be extant (manuscript of the libretto in the Larpent Collection).<sup>9</sup> The opera was quite successful and was revived Jan. 21, 1801, and again May 9, 1815 (in 2 acts), but I could find no copy of either edition. According to the reviews, the plot of the opera was founded on Goldoni's comedy *Un curioso accidente*, and under this title Da Ponte mentions it in *An Extract* . . . (1819). In the *Memoirs* he speaks of "un operetta buffa in un atto per Bianchi, che fu una delle migliori cose scritte nel buffo genere da lui . . .".

Jan. 10, 1797.

*Evelina*; or, The Triumph of the English over the Romans. A New Serious Opera; performed at the King's Theatre, in the Hay-Market. January, 1797. The Music, By Sacchini, Being his last, and a Posthumous Work. Translated from the French, By Lorenzo Da Ponte. Poet of this Theatre. And adapted to the Music by Mr. V. Federici.

London, L. Da Ponte, No. 134, Pall-Mall, 1797. pp. 65, 8vo.

This was Da Ponte's debut as a publisher (unless the lost libretto of *Il Consiglio imprudente* preceded it). Sacchini's last opera was, in the original French, called *Arvire et Évelina* (words by Guillard), and had been first produced at the Paris Opéra in 1788. The score was finished by Jean Baptiste Rey. In London, Rovedino and Banti sang the title-parts, Braham (or Braham as his name is printed in the libretto) sang Vellino, and Viganoni, Irvino. The work had been a great success in Paris, and there were quite a number of performances in London as well (manuscript score of the Italian version preserved in the British Museum); at least one terzet, an interpolation from another of Sacchini's French operas, was published.

March 11, 1797. The advertisement in *The True Briton* reads:

*Il Consiglio imprudente*. . . End of the Opera will be presented, in Honour of the Glorious Victory of His Majesty's Navy, on the 14th of last Month, an entire new Entertainment of Singing and Dancing, called La (sic) Nozze del Tamigi e Bellona. With Choruses and Dances incidental. The Music composed entirely new for the occasion, by Bianchi. The Dances also new, by Mr. Gallet. And the Poetry by Mr. Daponte. Principal Characters in the Cantata, Bellona, Mad. Banti; Tamigi, Sig. Viganoni; Genio d'Africa, Mr. Didelot; Genio d'Asia, Sig. Gentili; Genio d'America, Mad. Parisot.

<sup>8</sup> This Italian season of Nancy Storace is not mentioned in the long account of her career in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>9</sup> Fétis, i, 406, under Jacques Bianchi, mentions "The celebrated fughe in *Il Consiglio imprudente*" as published in London.

The victory alluded to was that of Admiral Jervis off Cape St. Vincent.<sup>10</sup> According to the *Memoirs*, Da Ponte had written the cantata originally for the wedding of George Prince of Wales with Caroline of Brunswick. The libretto does not seem to have been printed, which is a pity, as one would like to see how a *pièce d'occasion* celebrating a Royal wedding was made to fit a naval victory. The critics of the day were sharp enough to notice that there was something odd about the subject of the cantata.

After a revival of Paisiello's *Gli Schiavi per Amore* (March 14, for Ann Storace), one of Da Ponte's old Viennese successes was first produced in London:

April 18, 1797.

*L'Albero di Diana*, with music by Martin y Soler, and Ann Storace, Orsola Fabrizzi, Viganoni, Morelli, and Braham in the cast.

This had been originally produced at Vienna in 1787. There is no London libretto in the British Museum. The opera was announced alternately as *L'Albero di Diana* and *L'Arbore di Diana*. A new air by Mazzinghi, *Che bel spassetto*, was introduced and published separately.

April 27, 1797.

*Nina*; or, *Love has turned her Head*. A Comic Opera. As represented at the King's Theatre, Hay-Market. The Music by Paisiello.

London, J. Davenport, 1797, pp. 52.

Da Ponte is not mentioned in the libretto; there is hardly a doubt, however, that his arrangement was used, as he had adapted the same opera for Vienna in 1790. In London, Paisiello's opera was produced for Banti's benefit and proved to be as great a success as it was everywhere else. Some years later, April 24, 1800, it was given at the Haymarket with spoken dialogue instead of recitative (which evoked a protest from the managers of Drury Lane and Covent Garden against the infringement of their rights); and it was revived in London as late as 1825 for Giuditta Pasta.

June 8, 1797.

*Le Gelosie Villane*, A Comic Opera as represented at the King's Theatre, Hay-Market. The Music by the celebrated Mr. Sarti. Under the Direction of Mr. Federici.

London, L. Da Ponte, 1797, pp. (2) + 41, 8vo.

Apart from some minor changes, the same opera as represented in 1794 as *I Contadini bizzari* (see above). Da Ponte is not mentioned in this edition. Cimadoro's *Pygmalion* (an Italian adaptation of Rousseau's *scène lyrique*) was produced in the same bill, for Viganoni's benefit.

June 10, 1797.

*Merope*, serious opera in two acts, music by Bianchi.

According to the review, the words were "written by Da Ponte, the poet to the Opera House, from the Tragedy of Merope, by Voltaire". The manuscript of the libretto is in the Larpent Collection, the manuscript score in the British Museum. Some numbers of the music were published by Lavenu. According to the *Memoirs*, the libretto had been ready in 1795. It was one of the many

<sup>10</sup> Sheridan's entertainment *Cape St. Vincent, or British Valour Triumphant*, was given at Drury Lane on March 6 on the same occasion.

heroic operas Da Ponte and Bianchi wrote on Brigitta Banti's request and was revived at the Teatro della Pergola, Florence, in 1803.

No great changes were made in the company for the season of 1798, which opened on Nov. 28, 1797, with *Ipermestra*, a pasticcio, chiefly by Sarti and Paisiello. There followed revivals of *Nina*, *Evelina* and *Semiramide*, all with Banti, and on

Jan. 23, 1798.

*La Scola de Maritati*. A Comic Opera, in Two Acts. Composed here By Da Ponte, Performed at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. The Music by Sig. Vincenzo Martini, Music Composer to his Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of all the Russias.

London, E. Jackson, n.d., pp. 88, 8vo.

Morichelli's original part of Ciprigna was taken by Signora Angelelli, a new member of the company.

Feb. 20, 1798.

*Cinna*. A New Serious Opera, in Two Acts, As represented at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. The Music entirely New, and composed by Mr. Bianchi. Part of the Poetry by N. N. And the greatest Part by Da Ponte. The Scene lies in Syracuse.

[London], E. Jackson, n.d., pp. 49 + (1), 8vo.

I think this must have been adapted from the *Cinna* libretto by Angelo Anelli which was set to music by Asioli (Milan, 1792), by Portugal (Florence, 1793), and by Paer (Padua, 1795). Brigitta Banti was Servilia, supported by Rovedino as Octavius and Viganoni as Cinna. The opera is not mentioned in Da Ponte's *Memoirs*. Of the music (which, according to Parke was "scientific, original and pleasing"), one terzet seems to be all that is left (manuscript in the Royal College of Music).

March 10, 1798.

*La Cifra*. A Comic Drama. In Two Acts. By Da Ponte. Set to Music by Signor Salieri, in the actual Service of his Majesty the Emperor. The Scene lies in a Village in Scotland. Performed at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket.

London, E. Jackson, n.d., pp. (2) + 93, 8vo.

One of Da Ponte's Viennese operas, produced there in 1789, with Salieri's music. Like so many of Da Ponte's libretti, it was an adaptation of an earlier work, in this case of Petrosellini's *La Dama Pastorella* (Rome, 1780). It has to be admitted, however, that it became a great success all over Europe only in Da Ponte's version which was set to music once more in 1801 by Ferdinando Orlandi under the title of *La Pupilla Scozzese* (performed at Parma).

The rest of the season brought only revivals, and some new operas with which Da Ponte had no connection. He went to Italy on Oct. 2, 1798, in order to visit his family at Ceneda and to engage new singers for the King's Theatre. He returned on March 1, 1799, and from the vague allusions in the *Memoirs* we can imagine what amount of intriguing had been going on during his absence. His successor as official librettist, Serafino Buonaiuti, had made his appearance in the meantime, and for the rest of his London years Da Ponte's connection with the Italian opera-house was loose and irregular although he was re-instated in 1801. There were no works of his performed during 1799. The

text of Bianchi's opera, *Ines de Castro* (Jan. 22, 1799), has been wrongly attributed to him. It was an old opera of that composer, written on a libretto by Luigi de Sanctis and produced at Naples in 1794, and even if it was adapted for London, Da Ponte hardly had anything to do with it, as he was not in England at the time of its preparation and production.

The year 1800 brought only one revival of one of his earlier works, *La Semiramide* (Feb. 8, 1800; libretto reprinted), with almost the same cast as in 1794. But in 1801 there were revivals of no less than eight of his former adaptations and new librettos, viz. *Alceste* (Jan. 3), *Le Gelosie Villane* (Jan. 10), *Il Capriccio Drammatico* and *Il Consiglio imprudente* (on the same bill, Jan. 21), *Semiramide* (March 17), *La bella Pescatrice* (April 7), *L'Isola del Piacere* (June 11, for the benefit of the new prima donna buffa, Signora Vinci), and *La Scuola de Maritati* (July 14, also revived for Signora Vinci). The libretti of the two last-named operas were reprinted. It may be sufficient to quote here the title-page of *L'Isola del Piacere*, as this seems to be the only extant London edition of the opera.

June 11, 1801.

*L'Isola del Piacere*, or, *The Island of Pleasure*. A New Comic Opera: In Two Acts, as represented at the King's Theatre in the Hay-Market. The Music entirely New, by the celebrated Martini. Poetry by Mr. Da Ponte.

London, W. Glindon, n.d., pp. (2) + 67, 8vo.

To the year 1801 also belongs

*Saggi Poetici*, di L. Da Ponte. Parte I.

London, Printed by and for L. Da Ponte, No. 5 Pall Mall, 1801, pp. 100, 8vo.

This was probably a reprint of a work bearing the same title and published at Vienna in 1788 (in two vols.). The London volume (the second part never followed) contains as main features a long *Epistola al Sig. Casti* and a rather curious *Ditirambo degli Odori*, one of Da Ponte's earliest poems.

Da Ponte must have been restored to his post before the beginning of the 1802 season (in contrast to his statement in the *Memoirs* that this happened one year later) as he is again called "Poet to the Opera House" on the title-page of the libretto for the opening opera:

Dec. 29, 1801.

*Angelina*, A Comic Opera, in Two Acts. As Performed at the King's Theatre in the Hay Market. The Music by Signor Antonio Salieri. The Poetry by N. N. With many alterations by L. Da Ponte, Poet to the Opera-House.

London, Da Ponte, 1801, pp. 82, 8vo.

This is Salieri's opera *Angiolina ossia Il Matrimonio per Susurro*, original libretto by Carlo Prospero Defranceschi and first produced in Vienna on Oct. 22, 1800. The speed with which London followed up this continental success is quite remarkable. Possibly the fact that the opera was founded upon an English classic, Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* ("The Silent Woman") had something to do with it. The same text came to London some years later with new music by Valentino Fioravanti (May 24, 1810, "now re-translated and adapted to the present performers") and the same subject has served opera composers up to the present (*Die schweigsame Frau*, music by Richard Strauss, libretto by Stefan Zweig, 1935).

On Feb. 23, 1802, Nasolini's opera, *Mitridate*, was produced; the original text had been written by Antonio Simone Sografi in 1796, but Da Ponte had a finger in the London adaptation of it as shown by the following publication:

The Favorite Duett (*Il tuo destino ingrata*), Sung by Madame Catalani & Sigr. Siboni, in the Opera of *Mitridate* at the Kings Theatre in the Haymarket. Written by Daponti [*sic*] and Composed by Nasolini.

London, M. Kelly, n.d., folio.

This edition does not belong to 1802, but to a later date, as appears from the names of the singers. In fact, it must have been published in 1807 when another *Mitridate* opera, by Portugal, was produced for Catalani's benefit in which the duet from Nasolini's earlier work (originally sung by Banti and Rovedino) was introduced.

A new work by Da Ponte was the last production of 1802:

June 1, 1802.

*Armida*. A Grand Serious Opera, in Two Acts. As performed at the King's Theatre, in the Hay-Market. The Music by Bianchi. The Poetry by Da Ponte.

London, Bastie and Brettell, 1802, pp. 41, 8vo.

This was the last of the many operas Da Ponte wrote for Bianchi and for Brigitta Banti; at the same time it was the last of Bianchi's numerous operas (amounting to about 60) produced between 1773 and 1802, and the last in which Banti appeared on the London stage. She left after the end of the season for Venice, where she sang in 1803 and 1804, then went to Bologna, where she died on Feb. 18, 1806, at the age of forty-seven.

Her place at the Haymarket was taken by Elizabeth Billington who had just returned from Italy and was at the height of her fame. She was joined, one year later, by another star of international repute, Giuseppa Grassini, and it was for these two outstanding singers that Da Ponte wrote his last three operas. The music was provided by Peter von Winter, the Bavarian composer who had been introduced to the London public in 1800 by his comic opera *I due Fratelli Rivali* (originally written for Venice), and who now, in 1803, came to London himself in order to write and produce his new works. The first of them was performed on

May 31, 1803.

*La Grotta di Calipso*. Drama in due atti. Da rappresentarsi per la prima Volta nel Teatro Reale di Hay-market, 1803. Di Lorenzo Da Ponte. Colla Musica tutta nuova del Signor M. Winter. All' attual Servizio di Sua Altezza Serenissima l'Elettore di Baviera.

London, J. Brettell, n.d., pp. 49 (and 2, containing an additional duett for Billington and Viganoni). 8vo.

The opera was a great success and was repeated in the next season when the libretto was reprinted, with an English title-page (printed by Nardini and Da Ponte, No. 15, Poland Street), with two new airs for Billington, and the duet *Ah più non mi resta* inserted in its proper place. The favourite songs of the opera were published by Michael Kelly and a German vocal score appeared about the same time. Winter's second opera followed on

March 22, 1804.

*Il Trionfo dell' Amor Fraterno*; or, *The Triumph of Fraternal Love*: a Serious Opera,

in Three Acts, as represented at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket. The Music by M. Winter.

London, Nardini and Da Ponte, 1804, pp. 55, 8vo.

In this case, Da Ponte obviously forgot to put his own name on the title-page; he is stated to have been the author in the advertisements and in the printed songs, and he mentions the opera in his *Memoirs* where he says that he wrote it for Grassini. As a matter of fact it was written for Billington, who took the part of Talayra while the two rival brothers, Castor and Pollux were sung by Viganoni and Braham.

The last opera, written for both Billington and Grassini was produced on May 31, 1804.

*Il Ratto di Proserpina*, or *The Rape of Proserpine*, A Serious Opera in Two Acts, by Lorenzo Da Ponte. As represented at the King's Theatre in the Hay-Market, with entirely new Music by M. Winter, Now in the service of his Serene Highness the Elector of Bavaria.

London, Sold by Da Ponte, No. 19 Jermyn Street, printed by Nardini and Da Ponte, 15 Poland Street, n.d., pp. 53, 8vo.

This was produced for Grassini's benefit, who took the part of Proserpina, Billington singing her mother Ceres. It must have been a triumphal night as all witnesses agree; the description of this performance is a favourite item with all the chroniclers of the London operatic stage, Kelly, the Earl of Mount Edgumbe, Burgh, Parke, etc. The opera was revived in 1805 with Braham instead of Viganoni in the part of Ascalfo and again in 1815 and 1816 for Madame Vestris (libretto reprinted in 1805 and 1816; MS. score, British Museum).

After *Il Ratto di Proserpina*, Winter contributed still another opera for the King's Theatre, called *Zaira*, which was produced Jan. 19, 1805, and revived in 1816. The libretto bears no author's name, but is stated to have been Da Ponte's in the *Baierisches Musik-Lexicon* by Josef Lipowski (1811). No other evidence is forthcoming and so we must leave the matter at that. Anyway, Da Ponte just then had other things to worry about. His financial difficulties were increasing from day to day and at last forced him to flee to America; he sailed from Gravesend on April 7, 1805, and arrived at Philadelphia after a journey of 86 days.

The last chapter in his life begins. Some weeks after his departure, on June 13, Braham chose for his benefit Da Ponte's *Una Cosa Rara*, which had not been given in London for 16 years; it was revived with a splendid cast, including Billington, Storace, Viganoni, Braham and Kelly, and Giuseppa Grassini sang a solo scene between the acts. This may have been arranged in honour of their old comrade.

This then is a summary of Da Ponte's dramatic output in London (not counting the doubtful *Zaira*, nor *Una Cosa rara* and the three Mozart libretti as these were not produced during his stay):

Twelve original operas (two of them previously written for Vienna); four each for Martin y Soler and Bianchi, three for Winter and one for Mazzinghi.

Three smaller occasional pieces (two cantatas and one intermezzo).



Sixteen adaptations, alterations and translations, three of them (*Ifigenia*, *Nina*, and *Cifra*) originally written for Vienna.

During the years 1801-1805 much of Da Ponte's time was taken up by his printing and publishing business and his Italian book-shop of which he was very proud. His stock was sold by auction on April 16, 1804. The sale catalogue is extant and even the meagre descriptions of the books usual at that time give an idea of the marvellous collection it must have been. Apart from printing most of the opera libretti of those years Da Ponte also published some Italian Classics, for instance, an edition of Casti's satirical poem, *Gli Animali parlanti* (1802). His partner in business was his younger brother, Paolo Da Ponte (associated at different times with Bastie, Nardini, and J. B. Vogel), and he carried on the firm after Lorenzo's departure. When he saw him off at Gravesend, Da Ponte promised him to return to London within six months or else to have him come to join him in America. "But neither the one nor the other happened. My brother died in London two years after my departure and I am still in America." With these words Da Ponte closes the story of his London period. According to him, Paolo died in 1807. In the London directories, however, we find the firm of "L. Daponte, Foreign Bookseller", until several years after that date. The shop was situated at 28, Haymarket, in 1803; later they moved to 19, Jermyn Street, St. James's, and finally to 15, Poland Street. At the latter address the firm is recorded until 1810.

In the next year, on May 9, 1811, *Così fan tutte* made its first appearance at the Haymarket Theatre, followed by *Le Nozze di Figaro* in 1812, and at last by *Don Giovanni* in 1817. From that time onwards, Da Ponte's name was never to disappear again from the London opera bills.

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## Obituary

### Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

BY

EDWIN EVANS

WHENEVER a great figure passes from the stage of life there is always a tendency to describe him as the end of a chapter, as the last of the family tree which he adorned. Thus when Rachmaninov died not a few of the obituary notices spoke of him as the last of the Romantics. There are still Romantics with us, but we distinguish them from their predecessors by the prefix "neo", which a generation hence will mean less than nothing, beyond perhaps some developments in the vocabulary in which romanticism finds expression. Yet somehow the death of Rachmaninov seems to us to-day to imply a definite break with the past, but not exclusively a musical past, for it is linked to social conditions which are in their decline. Much as one may dislike to see the arts subjected to state ideology, it is possible to discern some logic in the hostile attitude taken twelve years ago by the Soviet authorities towards Rachmaninov's music. Though his life was overcast, and he does not appear to have known much happiness, the romanticism of his music is that of a comfort-loving environment rather than of broad humanity, and, feeling this, his Communist compatriots took the view that it was an expression of the *classes aisées* which they had abolished in their country and believed to be doomed elsewhere. But it would be a fundamental error to regard this as affecting either his personality or the aesthetic quality of his music, this aspect of which was the reflection of the period to which he belonged, for he was definitely a product of the nineteenth century whom the passing of time had left unchanged. In that sense it is true to say that he marked the end of a chapter.

He was born 20th March, 1873, on the estate of Oneig, situated in the government of Novgorod, on the river Volkhov, which was part of his mother's dowry. Among other estates held by the family was one which was a direct gift of the Empress Catherine. He was thus a scion of the old landed nobility, but his family was one of those brought near to ruin by the emancipation of the serfs, with paternal extravagance as a contributory cause. His parents separated and he was brought up by his mother and grandmother in circumstances which were far from comfortable. It was his cousin Alexander Siloti who counselled the removal of the family from Petrograd to Moscow, whither he in turn migrated two years later to become a professor at the Conservatoire. Meanwhile the boy had been studying the piano with Zverev, but he transferred to Siloti's master class. At the same time he worked at theory and composition with Taneïev (author of the most practical method of counterpoint ever devised) and Arensky. Zverev brought him under the notice of Tchaikovsky, who took a warm interest in his progress. At thirteen Rachmaninov arranged the latter's *Manfred* symphony for two pianos from the score which had just been published. Tchaikovsky's friendship for the boy continued until his death; Rachmaninov's devotion to his memory endured his whole life.

Rachmaninov graduated as a pianist in 1891, but continued at the Conservatoire one year longer and won the Gold Medal with his one-act opera *Aleko*. This was eventually produced in April, 1893, with such success that for a time it was known as the "Russian Cavalleria". Even before that he had found a publisher in Gutheil, who had issued first two 'cello pieces, op. 2, six songs, op. 4, and a little later five piano pieces, op. 3, one of which is the famous Prelude in C sharp minor. The most important works he published at this time were the first version, afterwards withdrawn, of the Piano Concerto in F sharp minor, op. 1, and the Elegiac Trio, op. 8, dedicated to the memory of Tchaikovsky, who died in October, 1893, and modelled upon the Trio which that composer had dedicated to the memory of Nicholas Rubinstein. This series of "early" works may be said to end with the *Moments Musicaux*, composed in 1896. By then Rachmaninov was well

launched upon his career both as pianist and as composer. Like many another before him, in later years he thought little of his "first period" works. About the time of the last war a young pianist asked me to suggest a concerto that had not been too often played which she might submit to Sir Henry Wood for the "Proms". I recommended Rachmaninov's op. 1, but when she tried to get it she was informed that the composer had put a ban on delivery of the orchestral material. I made some comment at the time and I like to think that it may have helped to induce Rachmaninov to reconsider his opinion, with the result that a revised edition appeared shortly afterwards. Undoubtedly the works of his maturity are more satisfying in an academic sense, but these early compositions have a freshness of outlook that did not persist through life—as it seldom does—and had a value of its own. Even in a trifle such as the Serenade of op. 3, with its prolonged sub-dominant pedal, is revealed a rare and charming personality.

By the time when Rachmaninov received in the autumn of 1898 the invitation of the (Royal) Philharmonic Society to visit London he was, as the invitation attests, already an international celebrity—though it must be admitted that this was largely due to the famous Prelude. I was present at the concert in 1899 when he appeared in the treble capacity of composer, pianist and conductor. He directed the symphonic poem the title of which has been variously translated as *The Cliff* or *The Rock*, after Lermontov, op. 7, and played a group of pieces among which the one that stamped itself on my memory was the Elegy from op. 3. He was received with enthusiasm and the loyal English public remained faithful to him from that day to the end. Apart from the bitter experiences incidental to the Russian Revolution his life thenceforth became that of a travelling virtuoso. He was fated to become most active in the one of those three capacities that, so far as one could judge, was least dear to him, but the public elected to hail him chiefly as one of the world's greatest pianists—as he undoubtedly was—and he accepted its decision, writing less and less as the years went on, and rarely conducting except performances of his own works.

His mastery of the keyboard was transcendental. Not only was it superior to every demand made upon it but technical difficulty seemed to arouse in him a kind of impatience which caused him sometimes, probably unconsciously, to force the pace precisely at points where most pianists would be tempted in the other direction. But the impetus never carried him past the meaning of the music. Such occasions left his audience breathless, but never confused. If his Beethoven was sometimes open to criticism it was not so much on that account as because the incompatibility of Slav and Teuton was too deep-seated to be entirely ignored. He was at his best in music of the Romantic period, where his impetuosity was never other than a virtue, and of course he played his own compositions as few other pianists have been able to play them.

Though he composed chiefly for his own instrument a brief survey of his works must be headed in accordance with tradition by his three symphonies. The First, in D minor, was composed in 1895, and had its one and only public performance in 1897, at a Belaïev concert in Petrograd, when it was a failure so complete that he never put it forward again. *Grove's Dictionary* is incorrect in stating that it was performed under Nikisch at a London Philharmonic Concert in 1909. That was the Second Symphony, in E minor, composed in 1907, which is the best known of the three. Nearly thirty years elapsed before the Third, in A minor, made its appearance. In the two symphonies we know he adheres closely to classical form except that in the Third, slow movement and scherzo are combined, as often in concertos. His only other orchestral work, apart from a gipsy caprice of early date, is the symphonic poem, *The Isle of the Dead*, inspired by Böcklin's well known painting. Surely if anyone doubted whether Rachmaninov was a nineteenth century Romantic that choice of subject, and the introduction of the *Dies Irae* (as again in the Rhapsody mentioned below) would determine the issue. A more significant work is *The Bells*, described as a Choral Symphony. This is the composition the performance of which brought matters to a head in Soviet Russia, where the bells themselves were regarded as expressing counter-revolutionary aspirations.

His output for piano is comparatively voluminous. It comprises 4 Concertos and

a *Rhapsody* with orchestra, 2 Sonatas, 2 sets of Variations, 6 *Moments Musicaux*, 24 Preludes, 15 *Etudes-Tableaux*, some other pieces for piano solo and duet, and 2 Suites for two pianos. It is in these and in over seventy songs that Rachmaninov's great lyrical gifts found the fullest expression. He was a rich and fertile melodist, as sensuous as Tchaikovsky himself but less fervent because of his overcast temperament which wooed more readily the elegiac Muse. The flow of luscious tune supported by his splendid command of pianistic resource will always remain Rachmaninov's most characteristic contribution to the music of his day. Even if the aesthetic he represents should pass into the limbo of ideas which have had their day pianists will still see to it that these works are not forgotten because not many composers have served them so well, studying their idiosyncrasies and placing the full effect of his own pianistic mastery, so to speak, under their hands.

It only remains to add that after *Aleko* he wrote one more opera, *Francesca da Rimini*, and that he has also composed Russian church music. Throughout his works he held severely aloof from all that is currently described as modernism, but exercised considerable freedom in his handling of the musical vernacular as he found it. When that unfortunate Symphony was performed in 1897 César Cui found occasion to accuse him of "atrocious modernism"—the only time on record that such a thing has happened to Rachmaninov. It makes one curious to learn what was "modernism" to César Cui in 1897. Perhaps some day the peccant Symphony may be "discovered" and we shall know.

## Henry Cope Colles

BY

DYNELEY HUSSEY

THE sudden death of Harry Colles in March deprived English musical life of one of its outstanding figures. Owing both to the conditions of anonymity under which a large part of his work was carried out and his own modesty which eschewed anything in the way of self-advertisement, it was not realized, except by those who had good cause to know, how great was the power he wielded. It was an influence created by a lifetime of service to the art, and it was potent simply because he used it with wisdom and discretion for the advancement of his ideals and never for any ignoble end of self-interest.

Henry Cope Colles was born at Bridgnorth in 1879. He came of a family that had migrated to Ireland from Worcestershire in the early 17th century. His grandfather was an eminent doctor and President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, and his father, also a medical man of distinction, had settled in England, moving shortly after Colles' birth to Wellington, Somerset, where his childhood was spent in a singularly happy and unworldly home. One of his aunts married Lord Ashbourne, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and as a young man Colles attended him on ceremonial occasions as his purse-bearer.

At the age of 16 Colles left school to study music at the Royal College, where Grove had just been succeeded in the directorship by Hubert Parry. It has become the fashion among the nimbler, but all too shallow, wits to belittle Parry, sneering at him for being a gentleman (he was that in the sense of being the most liberal-minded of men within the boundaries of his sense of rectitude and good taste) and mistaking his high-minded idealism for priggishness. That Parry had not in the highest degree the creative imagination that makes the greatest music is true enough. He had, perhaps, too profound an interest in musical history and therefore too scholarly an approach to the task of composition. It was this historical sense that the Director stimulated in his new pupil, showing him that there was useful work to be done with the pen otherwise than on music-paper. So Colles' latent talent for literary composition was fostered. At the same time he learnt from Sir Walter Alcock "the difference", as he himself put it, "between good and bad organ-playing", but he once confessed to the present writer that he learnt more

about the instrument from an hour or two spent in the organ-loft with Parratt than from all his formal lessons. He studied theory under Walford Davies, with whom he formed a life-long friendship that no difference of opinion could affect.

From the Royal College Colles proceeded to Worcester College, Oxford, having won the organ scholarship. Here again he found in Henry Hadow, Dean of the College, just the musical-literary influence to direct him towards what was to become his life's work. He graduated Mus.Bac. in 1902 and accepted an appointment as organist at Emmanuel Church, West Hampstead. In the meantime he began to write musical criticism for *The Academy*, edited by Mr. Harold Child.

The articles in *The Academy* were brought to the notice of Fuller-Maitland, the musical critic of the *Times*, who secured Colles' services as assistant in 1905. So began a connection which lasted for nearly forty years, during more than thirty-two of which Colles was the chief critic of the paper. That *The Times* maintained during those years a consistent leadership in musical opinion, comparable with its influence in other spheres during its best periods, was due entirely to Colles' conscientious hard work, temperate judgments, sound scholarship and wide sympathies.

Those were the fundamental qualities of his writing. But he was also a good journalist, and knew that dullness in that profession is the unforgivable sin. He was never dull. Even those who took no particular interest in music read him with pleasure for his wit and humanity and literary grace. He was a good writer with a sense of style. And just because his writing had style it is difficult to give examples of his wit, which grew out of the context and did not take the form of bright epigrams larded into it and therefore readily quotable. But as a sample of the kind of flash he could kindle may be given his remark upon some ill-controlled orchestral performance: "The wind blew where it listed", which is said to have so amused the faulty conductor that no offence was taken. That was the beauty of it; Colles had the art of making strictures upon faults without unnecessarily hurting the feelings of those concerned. More often than not he achieved his end rather by what he did not say than by what he did. Few writers have been more rewarding to readers with the wit to read between the lines.

But criticism in this sense was only a part of his journalism, and his journalism only a part of his life's work. He was above all constructive, seeking out first what was valuable in whatever was submitted to his judgment and laying stress first upon that. The faults would soon enough discover themselves. Therefore the critic could afford to be lenient to minor offenders, who would be forgotten to-morrow anyhow. Only the major offenders deserved castigation, and Colles' lash was all the more stinging for the restraint with which it was used. But the major task of the critic was to praise famous men, or rather to appraise them.

For this task Colles found scope in that admirable series of articles, which made the Saturday issue of *The Times* a weekly treat for the musical public. But these articles owed their success in part to their topicality, and, to that extent, they were ephemeral. He always steadfastly refused to "collect" them into a book, but there was much in them that deserves preservation and one hopes that a judicious collection may be made for publication. His permanent contribution to the literature of music consists of a series of books ranging from that admirable educational work, *The Growth of Music*, to his volume on nineteenth century Symphony and Drama in the *Oxford History of Music*, and the two editions of *Grove's Dictionary* which he supervised.

Whatever its failures to attain scientific precision, English historical criticism, and especially that school of it which has its seat in Oxford, has proved that history can be humane and that criticism need not be dry. The tradition, of which Burney, Grove himself, Parry and Tovey have been among the chief ornaments, bore its finest fruit in "Grove", which is an outstanding vindication of this kind of scholarship. In it the presentation of historical facts is combined with the expression of individual points of view controlled by a general sense of direction. "Grove" was always something more than a dictionary for reference and consultation; it was a book to read in. When, on his return to literary work after service as a Captain in the Royal Artillery during the war



of 1914-18, Colles undertook the production of the third edition, he found that something more was needed than the mere addition of material to bring the work up to date. There was, by contemporary standards, some disproportion in the space devoted to some of the standard subjects—a relic of Sir George Grove's personal enthusiasms. While the great articles on Beethoven and other classics were held, and one hopes will always be held, to be sacrosanct, others could with advantage be curtailed, and some had to be replaced by new work more in accord with modern conceptions of musical scholarship or philosophy. Colles' own articles, for instance that on Elgar, were equal to the best contributions of his predecessors, and he left the Dictionary a better-balanced work than he found it, but still imbued with the same spirit of humanity, liveliness and independent thought.

If the editing of "Grove" was his most "important" work, his most personal expression, possibly because it consists of a series of lectures designed for oral delivery, is to be found in *Voice and Verse*, a study of the English genius for song and of Purcell, one of his favourites, in particular. Yet his most solid work was the volume of the *Oxford History*, which covered the age of Brahms and Wagner. Of the one composer he wrote with an insight born of affection, of the other with an originality derived from an intimate knowledge of the music-dramas and a sure perception both of their great qualities and of their faults. One might have thought that in the 1920's it would be impossible to find anything really new to say about Wagner. Colles achieved the impossible and this chapter fulfils the definition of great criticism as being the impact of one great mind upon another. There is no reason for setting it lower as an illumination of his subject than Hazlitt's essays upon Shakespeare.

By the time he reached his ultimate task of bringing out a second revision of "Grove", Colles had received a Doctorate of Music from his University and an Honorary Fellowship from his College. For "a temperamentally lazy man", his own description of himself, he had produced a vast amount of work apart from his journalism, and he was still to bring out what was, perhaps, artistically his masterpiece—the memoir of his friend, Walford Davies, which is also a model of tact combined with perfect honesty.

But besides all this literary activity Colles found time and energy for other activities as a lecturer and as a member of committees. At the Royal College of Music he was as successful in inculcating the sound principles of musical history and judgment, as he had been during the Macedonian campaign, in initiating our Greek Allies into the mysteries of British heavy artillery. As a committee-man his sanity of outlook and quick perception of fallacy in a specious argument were invaluable to his colleagues.

With all his accomplishment and distinction of manner went a humility which, with his sense of humour, saved him from pomposity. In response to a note of congratulation on the volume in the *Oxford History* he replied:—

"I am really more diffident about my work than may be imagined from the impassive exterior which 30 years of musical criticism have taught me to preserve, and I value the good opinion of my younger colleagues perhaps more than that of my contemporaries. . . . I want to know what the younger and fresher minds brought up on a later phase of music think, and if anything I write appeals to them, I can feel that there may be some permanence in it."

The same humility preserved him in the face of some manifestations of the newer music, which he did not pretend to understand or to like, from a dogmatic dismissal of it out of hand. But he has not had his temperately adverse judgments of twenty years ago reversed by the Appeal Court of public opinion; and often, as in the case of Sibelius, he was years in advance of the bright young men who discovered what they took for a new star of the first magnitude in the 1920's.

This is not the place to touch upon the more intimate side of Colles' personality, but no account of him would be complete which omitted a reference to his religious sense which was the core of his being, from which sprang all his other qualities. It was natural, therefore, that his interest in the music of the Church should be far more than academic. He was an original member of the Council of the School of English Church Music, a chairman of the older Church Music Society and a Fellow of Ouseley's Foundation,



St. Michael's College, Tenbury, his visits to which delectable spot he always anticipated with pleasure. Apart from these official activities, his counsel and good taste were always at the service of Church musicians and were brought to bear upon such occasions as the King's coronation.

That he was a loyal colleague goes without saying, and to loyalty he added generosity and tolerance towards the vagaries of those who worked under him. He secured good team-work not by driving, but by leadership and example. One thing he found hard to forgive, disloyalty—not so much as a personal affront to himself, but as a gross, and to himself unintelligible, betrayal of the ideals for which he stood. That noble standard which he set up both in his writing and in his personal conduct—indeed the one is the reflection of the other—is at once an inspiration and a daunting challenge to those who are left to carry on his work. Change there must be, and a loss; for he was inimitable. But let us hope that the verdict will not be a derogatory, *Quantum mutatus ab illo!*

## Leslie Heward (1897-1943)

BY

CECIL GRAY

EXACTLY a year ago it was my melancholy duty and privilege to contribute an obituary notice to this journal on Hyam Greenbaum, whom I described as "the best conductor of his generation in this country". It was a slight exaggeration, pardonable I hope, under the circumstances; for he had an equal and a peer in Leslie Heward, who has now gone to join him at an equally tragically early age.

Both were born musicians to whom music was a natural language—a gift innate, not acquired. Both were what is called "infant prodigies". Leslie Heward was born near Bradford in 1897 of poor parents. At the age of five he learnt the organ; by the time he was eight he was able to accompany the choir in Handel's "Messiah" on that instrument, in its entirety. At the age of eleven he was given a chorister's scholarship at Manchester Cathedral by Dr. Sidney Nicholson, and shortly after became organist and choir master at a church in the same city. At sixteen he became an Associate of the Royal College of Organists, and then gained a scholarship in composition at the Royal College of Music. While still a student he was appointed music master, first to Eton, then to Westminster School. His first experience as a conductor occurred shortly after, when he was called upon at a moment's notice to direct a show at a West End theatre, which he carried off with triumphant success, thereafter becoming one of the regular conductors of the British National Opera Company. Then for a few years he occupied the post of musical director to the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra and the South African Broadcasting Service. He returned to England in 1927 and resumed the post of conductor to the B.N.O.C. Three years later he took over the direction of the City of Birmingham Orchestra in succession to Sir Adrian Boult, a post which he held until his death. In addition he had many outside engagements—occasional Symphony Concerts and frequent broadcasts.

It would be untrue, therefore, to suggest that Heward was neglected and ignored in the way that Greenbaum was; but it is no reflection on Birmingham and the admirable orchestra of that city to say that his genius—and I use the term advisedly, with all due respect to its implications—did not receive the recognition and appreciation to which it was entitled. He was not unsuccessful or a failure by any means, but the measure of his success was grotesquely inadequate to his superlative talent. His position should have been that of a Toscanini or a Beecham, a Furtwängler or a Mengelberg, no less. It is not betraying any secret to say that he felt himself thwarted and frustrated, in a dead end, a *cul de sac*. Just before the war he went to the United States and Canada in a desperate attempt to break out of the circle in which he found himself confined. He was actually there at the outbreak of hostilities, but had of course to return for obvious reasons.

The chief reason for his comparative lack of success with the public lay in his absolute integrity. He had no showmanship whatsoever—not so much because he was incapable of it as because he despised it and would not stoop to it. No conductor of our times has inspired so much love and veneration in his orchestra as Leslie Heward, but audiences remained comparatively unmoved. His gestures and movements were directed to the players, not to the audience, in fact.

He was, I should say, beyond question the best all-round conductor in England in his time, the most far reaching and catholic in his taste. He was as completely satisfying an interpreter of Brahms as of Berlioz, of Debussy as of Tchaikowsky. But of everything he did it is his performances of Mozart that stand out most prominently in my memory. Here, in my belief, he excelled the greatest conductors of our time, without exception. Toscanini, for example, is altogether too rigid and forceful in both tempo and phrasing, too Italian for Mozart; Beecham, on the other hand, altogether too eighteenth century snuff box, precious, mannered, too highly scented. Heward, it always seemed to me, struck exactly the right line. The secret of his success here lay, I think, in a certain temperamental affinity. He had that quivering sensibility, lying between pain and pleasure, laughter and tears, which is the privilege and burden of so many great artists—perhaps the greatest—and which is best exemplified in Mozart. This natural temperamental affinity to the music of Mozart was enhanced by the circumstances of his life. Always in later years a martyr to illness—and tuberculosis was only one of his many physical tribulations—I felt that he knew very well that he had not long to live, and this gave an added emotional intensity to everything he did. The particular kind of incandescence, as of a flame burning in oxygen, which characterises the music of Mozart, was also typical of Leslie Heward, and indeed of most artists who die young. I remember once quoting to him those lines of Andrew Marvell, which we agreed were among the loveliest and most poignant in the English language:—

"But at my back I always hear  
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near:  
  
Rather at once our time devour  
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.  
Let us roll all our strength and all  
Our sweetness up into one ball,  
And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
Thorough the iron gates of life:"

I felt at the time that these lines had a very personal message for him.

Leslie Heward was not only a conductor, as was commonly supposed. He was also a composer of outstanding talent, and only his career as a professional conductor stood in the way of his acceptance as a composer on his own merits. In this country versatility is the one unforgivable sin. To be able to do one thing supremely well is already more than most people can stand, but to do two or three is more than can be endured. Where composer-conductors are concerned it must be admitted that there are certain justifications for the prejudice. Composers are generally bad conductors, and conductors are generally bad composers. There are exceptions, however. Constant Lambert is one, and Leslie Heward was another. Writing music was no mere side-line for him, but as important a part of his activities as conducting. Of his considerable output unfortunately I know comparatively little. Characteristically he never took advantage of his opportunities as a conductor to introduce his works into his programmes. I heard a performance once of a *Nocturne* for Orchestra—a remarkably original and arresting work—otherwise I only saw various manuscript compositions on which I would hesitate to express an opinion without the opportunity of hearing them. The last of such works that I saw was a setting of a poem by Francis Thompson which he had just written the night before. Waking at four o'clock in the morning, he got out of bed, wrote the song—quite a long one, incidentally—straight off and then retired to bed again. This is as

impressive an indication of a genuine creative urge as any I have seen or of which I have ever heard tell.

As a pianist he was in the first class, and made many public appearances, though chiefly as an accompanist. His capacity for sight-reading, and playing from full scores, was fantastic and became legendary even in his life time. I can speak here from personal experience, for I have known him play through works of my own, of great complexity, and written in a by no means legible script, at sight, without the slightest hesitation; stopping only to insert a missing accidental or to correct a slip of my pen which his uncanny lynx-like eye had at once detected.

If one were to try to find the one word which best summed up Leslie Heward's personality, both as man and artist—for he was all of a piece—it would be *generosity*. He was one of these rare people who give rather than take. With so many interpretative artists one feels that music exists for them, not they for music. They make a more than comfortable living out of it, and in addition they use it as a means to the realization of their personalities, such as they may be, and as a method of attracting the opposite sex (and sometimes even the same one). Leslie Heward, whose personality was so much deeper and finer than that of so many other interpretative musicians whose names I could and would mention were it not for the law of libel, sought only to sink his personality, to realize the work in hand; to serve, and to give.

The last time I saw him conduct in public was an unforgettable experience, and a typical example of what I have been saying. He entered so quietly and unobtrusively that the audience was unaware of his presence until too late even for perfunctory applause, and stood on the rostrum with his back to the audience, with bent shoulders and bowed head, concentrating and collecting his thoughts for the task before him, completely oblivious of everything else, only concerned to give everything he had to the greater glory of art and God—they are of course only different names for the same thing.

The same with the man. He was without exception the most generous man I have ever known, even in purely material things. To be in his company meant that one was not allowed to pay for anything at all, which could be embarrassing and even infuriating on occasion. But above all he had the gift for friendship, and the word gift is here not a *cliché*, but the *mot juste*—he was always giving. I think he received it back from a few, at least in some measure.

To have known Leslie Heward both as artist and man remains one of the most cherished recollections in the lives of some of us; one of the rare experiences which go a long way to restore one's sadly shaken faith in human nature. He was an example of that rarest combination in the world, a fine artist who was also a lovely personality.

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WILLIAMS, MONTAGU NORMINTON. Flight-Sergeant A.G./W.O., R.A.F. It is with great regret we hear from Mr. Florian Williams, Managing Director of Joseph Williams, Limited, that his younger son, familiarly known as "Mr. Norman," and a Director in his father's firm, had a bad "crash landing" on 27th May and died almost immediately in hospital at the age of 31. Mr. Norman had only recently returned from six months' active service in North Africa. He leaves a young wife and two children. He had served 14 years in the family business and will be sorely missed.

## Book Reviews

*Farewell, My Youth.* By Arnold Bax. Pp. 112. (Longmans, Green & Co.) 1943. 7s. 6d.

The Master of the King's Music allows his pen to ramble more or less inconsequentially over a wide field. Parts of the book are worth reading by any standard of judgment, but as a whole it will appeal more to the general reader than the musician: there is no index, and the musical anecdotes, of which there are several good examples, are best located by plodding through much of the less interesting general matter. (You may find that the narrative regains your interest just when you are on the point of skipping a page or two.)

One masterly essay in perspicacity must be quoted (*v. p. 34*):—

"... the English . . . readily submit to boredom, and in some perverse way the former [Englishman] at any rate persuades himself that he is acquiring merit by its means. 'The audience at a Queen's Hall Symphony Concert', once wrote Rowan-Hamilton, 'wears a look of gloomy intelligence, of furtive expectancy, as though it were assembled for the practice of some secret vice.' On the contrary, it is a display of virtue in public that the Englishman is after. No longer a churchgoer, he salves his conscience by going instead to Bach, and seeks to do his duty by his God in undergoing four *Brandenburg* Concertos in succession without an anaesthetic. . . . To suffer boredom and the ordeal by art is for the Englishman a penitential exercise."

Before the war this was almost literally true. Nowadays we are asked to recognise the great revival of interest in music in this country; but the majority of the new "musical" public that revel in the Tchaikovsky, Grieg and Rachmaninoff piano concertos know nothing of the *art* of music and would be bored stiff if they met it. They prefer the *Lost Chord* to Haydn's *Emperor* Hymn, and the *Eighteenth Century Drawing Room* (or whatever it is called) to the original Mozart Sonata. Someone is sure to write and tell me that this isn't true. I wish it wasn't.

Read Sir Arnold's book. It is a real curate's egg, like so much of his music; curates can be delightfully entertaining and even provocative. G. N. S.

*The Evolution of Musical Form.* By Edward C. Bairstow. (Oxford University Press.) 7s. 6d.

This book originated in six lectures given by the author at University College, Hull, as the Ferens Lectures on Art for 1940. We are told that, for publication, the number of musical examples has been greatly amplified. The six chapters which make up this useful little work are, however, still six lectures and in this fact reside such weaknesses as are to be found. Given to audiences of enthusiastic amateurs, young students and a sprinkling of professional musicians, to quote from the *Introduction*, they must have been cheerful, stimulating affairs. In cold print they will most profitably be read by students with a degree of formal training, and perhaps less profitably by the large body of amateurs who depend essentially for their musical enlightenment upon listening rather than reading.

Professional musicians and teachers will like Professor Bairstow's writing. The pattern of his argument is clear and convincing, and the neat way in which the fundamentals of Form reveal themselves as the history of its development is sketched in is bound to appeal. Besides, they will be able to read into the script the numerous examples without recourse to the piano. Here is one aspect of the weakness referred to. When Professor Bairstow gave these lectures his gramophone and some performers did the hard work. Readers not trained to scan music will not do it for themselves. They never do, and that is why the writing of a good popular book on any aspect of the appreciation of music presents a problem which has never really been solved and does not come any nearer to solution here in the difficult aspect of Form.

Accepting this book on the level of its appeal to advanced students it has much to offer and, in particular, should be possessed by all who essay to lecture on Music Appreciation. Conveying the essentials of musical form to untrained people is a difficult business and the author produces for us a few very taking tricks of presentation. The chapter on The Cadence is a gem of lucidity. Melodic Form is treated well, but starts badly, for one reader at least, with the well-worn implication that *Londonderry Air* is the father and mother of all tunes. Suite Movements, Fugues and Sonata Form provide further chapters and a final chapter on Modern Developments is acceptable providing you know your Vaughan Williams and are prepared to accept his *London* Symphony as saying everything that Professor Bairstow says it does.

The chapter on Sonata Form is somewhat marred by the author's excursion into aesthetics whilst doing so well with the mechanics of his subject. If we believe him, not until Beethoven did Sonata Form become capable of expressing "the deep feelings of mankind". We get the impression that Mozart must be quite small beer beside the thin, sweet wine of Haydn and the rich, heady liquor of Beethoven. What is most difficult to understand is the setting up of Mozart's piano sonatas beside those of Beethoven reinforced with the nine symphonies, and the complete absence of any mention of the symphonies of Mozart. This is a calculated wrong, one feels, dictated by the author's anxiety to show us what Beethoven did with Sonata Form rather than what Mozart was not able to do. A laudable object this, but to pursue it with Bairstow is to achieve a somewhat unbalanced view of the growth and application of that pattern which has made possible nine-tenths of the world's great music.

It is to be hoped that Professor Bairstow will write a bigger book on Musical Form where it might not be necessary, as it was in his lectures, to squeeze each main subdivision of the subject into a single essay of fixed length irrespective of its relative importance. In a lengthier treatment of his subject proper his charming discursiveness would find its place in making for easy and enjoyable reading. Also he would have the space necessary for showing more clearly the organic nature of the development of form, which was even less influenced by sudden revolutions than one might think from a reading of his present essays.

Where would piano sonatas be without the Alberti<sup>1</sup> bass? In an entertaining reference, the author describes this invention as "the most overworked drudge in music of all time," stating that he has not worked out all its possible permutations. Nor, as far as is revealed by a fairly extensive library, has anyone else. To do so was a pleasant mathematical exercise which produced the following answer:—

<i>Method of playing.</i>	<i>Number of variants.</i>
Starting on the bass note; the commonest way since that note governs the harmonic progression .. .. .	Twelve
Starting on any note .. .. .	Thirty-six
Starting on any note with no repeated notes, which were difficult for the harpsichord and clavier .. .. .	Twelve
Starting on the base note with no repeated notes. (See Alberti, Clementi, Bertini, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, <i>et al.</i> ) ..	Four.

J. B.

*The History of Musical Instruments.* By Curt Sachs. (Norton, New York.) 1940. (Distributors for Great Britain: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.)

Readers who are familiar with this author's previous books on musical instruments—the monumental *Reallexikon*, the splendid Catalogue of the instruments at the Berlin Hochschule, and the useful *Handbuch der Musikinstrumentenkunde*—would expect something good when a new history was announced a few years ago. Those who are fortunate

<sup>1</sup> The Alberti bass is a four-note figure built on three notes of a common chord and is most commonly met in the form:—c, g, e, g.

enough to get hold of a copy of the new book will not be disappointed. The profound knowledge of the author is indisputable, and his ability to co-ordinate a mass of material and set forth the development of his theme in well-ordered sequence can never have been in doubt; but there may have been some curiosity to know how Sachs would handle the subject in a language which was not his own, for this is his first book in English. There need have been no fear on this account. Everything is expressed in the plainest and clearest language, indeed, with a terseness which at times amounts almost to abruptness, but which must surely be very welcome to many who have endured much from the characteristic long-windedness of so many German authors.

Sachs has planned his work in four main periods—Prehistoric, Antiquity, Middle Ages, and the Modern Occident—the latter embracing the period which covers almost the whole of the history of cultured music, namely, from about the XV century up to the present time. Each of these periods is subdivided into racial epochs, except the last, which is based on style-periods, the Renaissance, the Baroque, Romanticism and the Twentieth Century, and is necessarily largely concerned with European art.

The book begins with the noise-makers and sound-producing apparatus of prehistoric man; the rattles, stampers, drums, bull-roarers and friction-instruments of remote ages. The interest here is more anthropological than musical, and the strange and close connection of sounding-instruments with the religions, superstitions, customs, and even the sex of their users is emphasized and admirably explained.

The musical and artistic aspect begins to emerge only very gradually in the period of Antiquity, when the instruments of ancient civilizations—Babylonia, Egypt, Ancient Greece, India and the Far East—come under survey. But it is not until the later Middle Ages are reached that the musician begins to feel that the story bears some relationship to the art that he now knows. Testimony to the thoroughness with which the early part of the history is handled may be found in the fact that the book is already more than halfway through before Western European art and instruments begin to come under consideration.

In the later sections of the book the pace quickens considerably as the rush of instruments in the XVI and XVII centuries demands more detailed attention, and with the XIX century the acceleration is still more marked. But the development of musical instruments during the last 150 years has already been generously treated in many specialized books, and no doubt Sachs didn't consider it necessary to go over so much of the same ground in full detail. The pictorial illustrations are provided in 24 excellent photographic plates, some of which will be new to readers, and in some 170 line-drawings, most of which will be familiar to readers of the author's previous books.

Altogether, the work is a fine achievement by a master of his subject, and English readers may count themselves fortunate that it has been written in their own language. The exigencies of war-time may limit the supply of copies in this country; and in this respect alone we are unfortunate.

*Musical Instruments.* By Karl Geiringer. Pp. 339. (Allen & Unwin.) 1943. 25s.

It was perhaps a little unfortunate that this book should follow so soon after the much larger work by Sachs. It covers the same vast period, and is necessarily based on the same material, but has had to be done in about a third of the space. Thus—and it could hardly be otherwise—the shorter book inevitably reads rather as if it were an abridged version of the other. Geiringer, however, wrote in German, and this was translated, and was then revised in order to guard against technical divergencies of meaning that are almost bound to creep in during the process of translation by a non-expert in the subject. But, as it has emerged, the outcome is surprisingly satisfactory; the reader is only rarely conscious that it is a translation, and the final revision has been very thorough and careful.

The history is preceded by an admirable chapter on Acoustics, clearly expressed in words that can hardly be misunderstood by the non-scientific musical reader; and the author has wisely avoided the scientific formulae which so easily enmesh the mere musician



in an entanglement of tables and calculations from which he rarely escapes with a clear understanding of the subject.

Geiringer condenses his period of prehistory and antiquity into the shortest possible space. Like Sachs, he begins with the noise-making apparatus of early man, but skims over the ground at a rate which brings him to the end of the period in ten short pages, for which Sachs had occupied about 180 large pages.

For the Middle Ages, Geiringer follows each type of instrument separately, and continues this method throughout the book, thus making the type, rather than its use geographically, the basis of his plan. About two-thirds of the book are devoted to the instruments of the Renaissance, the Baroque, the Classical and the Romantic and Modern phases of musical history, and the crowding of the information in the later pages suggests that the author's greatest difficulty was in deciding what to omit, rather than what to include.

But, within its limited compass, it is improbable that the story could have been better told; nothing of importance is overlooked, and the reader who wishes a quick survey of the vast subject will find in this book all that he wants, and certainly as much as he can expect.

The pictorial illustrations are generously supplied in 65 photographic plates, with a few diagrams in the text. The choice of pictures calls for some comment. The author has aimed at showing the instruments in the hands of contemporary players, "and not as lifeless pieces of wood or brass". For any period before the 16th century, indeed, there is no other choice, because the instruments of the earlier ages, on the whole, have not survived. Our knowledge of instruments in the Middle Ages depends almost entirely on pictorial representations, and these are almost invariably depicted in the hands of players. But that plan has decided disadvantages when the instruments of the last four centuries are to be shown. The player is always the central and most prominent figure, the instrument is often only partially shown, and the detail is generally obscured. Moreover, when a large picture is reduced in size to a few inches, the instruments are apt to be very small or indistinct, as happens, for example, in Brueghel's *Allegory of Hearing*, in which some of the instruments to which the reader's attention is directed can be located only with difficulty. Similar shortcomings crop up when parts of modern orchestras are photographed while playing. We may get excellent portraits of players, but some very poor and blurred pictures of their instruments. We are shown, for example, a kettledrum player (Pl. LII) and a cor anglais player (Pl. LIII), but their instruments are barely recognisable. Then, if an instrument *must* be shown in the player's hands, the two should surely be contemporaries. Pl. LV shows a collector of the present day *pretending* to play a serpent of about 150 years ago, and encircled with a stockade of bassoons, for all the world like a sports champion photographed with his silver cups and trophies.

But the author has not been able to carry out his primary idea of showing the instruments in the hands of players. Of some 90 photographs, quite 40 are of instruments without their players, and these "lifeless pieces of wood or brass" provide by far the best and clearest pictures of instruments in the book.

Both Sachs and Geiringer eschew footnote references. The latter asserts that the amateur does not want them, and the expert does not require them. It may be granted that the general reader finds a multitude of footnotes very distracting, but it can hardly be expected that the expert, who requires contemporary evidence for every statement, will always be able to find the necessary reference unless he is given the title of the book and the page on which it occurs. A bibliography, however ample, cannot take the place of specific references.

Except for a certain spottiness on some of the plates, the book is excellently produced; the typography is good, and there are two beautifully coloured plates. Altogether, a good specimen of war-time book production.

A. C.

*Antonin Dvořák: His Achievement.* Edited by Viktor Fischl. Pp. 297. (Lindsay Drummond.) 1942. 8s. 6d.

With the best will in the world it is impossible to describe this miscellaneous collection of essays as other than very disappointing. It is ambitious and provides a fair quota of music-examples, but unfortunately they are very imperfectly reproduced from the manuscript, which, though a comparatively inexpensive process, is by no means an adequate substitute for the engraver's art. A further technical irritation is that there is no consistent policy discernible in the use of quotes, capitals or italic type (Mr. Fischl's essay is the worst offender here). Finally, misprints are far too plentiful.

Not all the essays are of equal value either in their matter or the fluency of their style. Julius Harrison, Ernest Walker and Thomas Dunhill steal most of the honours; but all the other chapters (except two) are quite readable. Gerald Abraham makes some very good points, but has one quite unintelligible sentence (p. 200, end of para. 2).

The remaining contributors are: Edwin Evans, H. C. Colles, Mosco Carner, Frank Howes, Astra Desmond and Harriet Cohen. About half the book deserves re-issue in another edition. We hope Messrs. Lindsay Drummond may be able to undertake this, and that if they do they will rectify the various shortcomings which are far too numerous to be condoned even in a war-time effort.

G. N. S.

*Music in the Middle Ages.* By Gustave Reese. With an introduction on the music of Ancient Times. (Norton, New York.) (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.) 1940. 25s.

It may seem a superficial task to review a book which was published in America in 1940, and has since been reprinted several times. But it is necessary to draw attention to this very important publication, the first in the English language to cover the whole ground of Medieval music, all the more because few copies are available to readers in this country. The author modestly states that his book is primarily destined for the American student. This is certainly an understatement. Reese's book is the ideal textbook for anybody who wants information about the period. H. Besseler's well-known *Die Musik des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* and Th. Gérold's *Histoire de la musique des origines à la fin du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* are both indispensable to the student who has already acquired some knowledge of the history of medieval music. But Reese's book gives a more complete and balanced survey of musical development during the Middle Ages. He pays equal attention to all its phases, and he also avoids forcing his own views on the reader. Where scholars disagree about the interpretation of certain stages of early medieval notation Reese gives an impartial account of the main hypotheses, leaving it to the reader to decide for himself which solution he prefers to accept. This attitude is very welcome in a book dealing, particularly in its first chapters, with the most difficult phase in the history of music, namely, the growth of music in the West in the early Middle Ages. Next to it comes the age of the Troubadours, Trouvères, Minstrels and Minnesinger. For forty years the rhythmical interpretation of the melodies had caused a violent feud between the main exponents of two strictly opposed theories. In the meantime much work has been done to elucidate the question. Reese gives a concise statement of the difficulties, making it clear to all those who still may believe that there is too much talk about music and that the musical documents speak for themselves, how much work is still required before we can accept modern transcriptions from the MSS. as fully reliable documents.

In the use of the book the reader is assisted by a spacious bibliography (pp. 425-63) and a list of records (pp. 465-80). It can only be hoped that Reese's book may have a wide circulation. In order to replace Besseler's work it would, however, be necessary to enlarge the number of musical examples, particularly in the later chapters. E. J. W.

## Reviews of Music

Bartók. *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion*. (Boosey & Hawkes.) Miniature score 8s.

Bartók. *Violin Concerto*. Reduction for violin and piano by the composer. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 12s. 6d.

The word "masterpiece" should be treated as a medical dispenser treats poisons—at any rate, as I in my ignorance imagine a dispenser treats poisons. It should be kept locked up and used only on rare occasions and in small doses. Yet I am badly tempted to use it here; worse, I am tempted to use it twice. In the first case I need not hesitate: Bartók's Sonata for two pianos and percussion has been heard both "neat", as it is printed here, and with its orchestral adulteration; the student's eye and mental ear are only leisurely confirming what the physical ear has already taken in. And it seems to me that the Sonata is very much more than a brilliant essay in writing almost entirely percussive music. The technical problems of percussive music no longer exist for Bartók; he has been treating the piano as a percussion instrument ever since his early *Bagatelles*; his every orchestral score has shown his interest in, and usually his mastery of, the possibilities of orchestral percussion. This Sonata is the work of a man who no longer thinks of problems, those particular problems, because he has all the solutions at his finger-tips. And he uses this acquired mastery to say things—vital, pungent things—that could be said in no other way. Again, the Sonata could have been written only by a musician with easy and absolute command of his harmonic medium. It is almost a simple work harmonically. By 1932 Bartók had left his really abstruse harmonic period behind him. (There are some nasty-looking agglomerations of notes in the slow movement of the Sonata, but they are only nasty-looking, not unpleasant to the accustomed ear—and they are treated simply as organum.) The musician who knows his Bartók at all well will find no more difficulty in understanding this Sonata, from the point of view of idiom, than the composer can have done in writing it. That, of course, does not affect its aesthetic value. But I can only record the opinion of one who claims to understand the Sonata: that it is packed with musical significance, that it is spare and compact, and *hard* and final, in a manner that is peculiar to the class of work one can honestly and cold-bloodedly call masterpieces.

And the Violin Concerto? Two factors impose caution: the reviewer has not heard the work, and the very straightforward and playable piano part (with no indications of scoring) can only be a sketchy substitute for the orchestra. But having made these reservations, I can at least say that we have here a work comparable in weight and value with the great violin concertos of the last century. I say comparable: not necessarily equal—though it may well be. (Only you can no more weigh masterpieces on aesthetic scales than you can draw out Leviathan with a hook.) The Concerto was finished on the last day of 1938, more than six years after the Sonata. That it is six years more mellow may be due to the composer's natural development; the same mellowing is noticeable in the Sixth String Quartet, written the following year. But it is also due, I fancy, to the different medium; the violin is not a percussion instrument. But the violin can sing and slash and outline brilliant arabesques, and Bartók gives it plenty of chances to do all three. By planting in the customary place near the end of the first movement a fiendishly difficult cadenza, as a sort of "Trespassers will be Prosecuted" warning to all but superb technicians, the composer has done his best to ensure that his music shall be attempted only by a soloist who can really master it. Such a soloist will have some magnificent music to play;

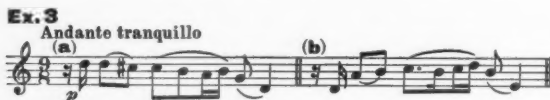
a fine bold first movement, cut out with a master's hand, a fine set of variations, and a dashing finale whose opening theme:



is really the thematic hero of the whole work—till now disguised. Here it is as the chief theme of the first movement:



and here as separate motives of the theme of the variations:



Incidentally, these variations (like the permutations of the main theme) offer first-rate material to the student of Bartók's composition-technique, in which the material is handled and developed plastically rather than logically.

Haydn. *Divertimento* for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, arranged by Harold Perry. Miniature score and parts. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 3s. 6d.

Mozart. *Quartet in F* (K. 370) for oboe, violin, viola and violoncello. Miniature score and parts. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 4s. 6d.

Mozart. *Symphony No. 41 in C*. Edited by Sir Thomas Beecham. (Boosey & Hawkes.) Score 10s., Parts 17s. 6d.

The Haydn divertimento is none other than the celebrated work—known to almost everyone by repute and to hardly anyone at first-hand—which provided Brahms with the theme of his great set of orchestral variations. Or, rather, it is a perversion of that celebrated work. Haydn scored his *Feldpartita* for an odd combination, it is true: two oboes, two horns, three bassoons and serpent. (Presumably that was the constitution of Prince Esterhazy's military band.) But by the simple expedient of transferring the serpent part to a tuba or double-bassoon, it is perfectly easy to play the work as Haydn wrote it, and one wonders why the publishers have elected to issue an arrangement instead of the original. The divertimento is a pleasant little work in four movements, the second being the *Chorale St. Antoni* which caught Brahms' fancy and thus rescued the whole composition from limbo. Incidentally, both the minuet and the final rondo bear a not-too-distant thematic relationship to it.

The charming Mozart Oboe Quartet calls for little comment; it has been edited by the greatest living exponent of the oboe part, Leon Goossens. But the new edition of the *Jupiter* Symphony demands more detailed discussion. Again the editor is a very distinguished exponent of the work, and one warmly welcomes Beecham's appearance in this unfamiliar role. We are familiar with editions of the piano classics by famous pianists, and though some of us prefer a clear *Urtext* these editions are always suggestive and valuable as records of notable interpretations if in no other way. It is to be regretted

that so few eminent conductors have done anything parallel. Sir Thomas is modest enough in his claims. "This edition", he says, "is intended less for professional than for non-professional musicians. . . . I am under no opinion (*sic*) that my readings are infallible or even correct; there is no final interpretation of any great master. But what I do claim is that they may help the members of that large and increasing number of orchestras in educational institutions who naturally have only a limited time to give to the study of the subject to the fuller realization of the poetry, charm and vigour to be discovered in these masterpieces." But Sir Thomas' markings will be studied with profound interest by every intelligent musician interested in the interpretation of Mozart.

The text of this edition—as distinct from Beecham's gloss on it—is, on the whole, a good one. That is to say, it is based mainly on the autograph score and generally accepts the variants of the first edition only when they are obviously right. (Most of the variants of the first edition are errors—and unfortunately errors that have passed into general currency.) But here and there the present edition unaccountably favours the first edition after all; thus on p. 8, bar 1, the G of the double-basses should be an octave lower; on p. 10, bar 11, the D flat of the violas, 'cellos and basses is obviously an error (*cf.* the same figure on the violins); and in the passage beginning at bar 6 on p. 30, the editor has unaccountably rejected Mozart's own phrase-marks, first for the violins, then for the lower strings, in favour of those substituted by Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel's inspired engravers in 1828. Sir Thomas has sensibly substituted horns in F and trumpets in B flat for Mozart's horns and trumpets in C. (Mozart wrote for horns in F only in the slow movement.)

G. A.

Alan Rawsthorne. *Bagatelles* for pianoforte. Dedicated to Gordon Green. (O.U.P., 1943.) 3s. 6d.

The name of these pieces allows a supposition that there may be something trifling about them, which is far from being the case. It also fails to indicate that they are closely related to each other, all four being based upon the same theme, so that however complete each one may be when separately considered they certainly gain by being played as a whole. How to designate this cycle is not an easy question, for although it possesses a quality of unity which might be likened to that in a case of family miniatures, no conventional musical term such as Suite or Partita is sufficiently typical. Each one of the pieces opens with a statement of the unifying theme, always with a new rhythm, and in the fourth piece inverted as well. There is austerity, mystery, whimsical grace, fantasy, pathos, brevity of statement and swift transition of mood, indeed a surprising range of qualities in the short space of time occupied by the four *Bagatelles*, which seem primarily intended for a select public of serious and progressive music lovers. The composer tantalizingly fails to tell us whether the conclusion of No. 3 must be played only on a Steinway pianoforte with the patent third pedal, or whether a mysterious blur is intended in retaining the low bass E flat.

Bernard Stevens. *Theme and Variations* for pianoforte. (Universal [London], 1942.) 3s. 6d.

Here we have a scholarly gravity of style attaining at times (as in the theme itself) real beauty and distinction, though at other times creating the impression that a highly talented composer is so pre-occupied with the fascinations of contrapuntal ingenuity that he allows his judgment to falter in other directions both human and aesthetic. One instance of this is his zest in writing a strict canon, which he tends to regard too much as an end in itself apart from the value of the material canonised. Another is that the compressed variations 2, 3 and 4 are all of them so much shorter than the theme itself that the architectural proportions suffer, especially with the shortening device occurring very early in the work. The best variations are those which are imaginative or tragically expressive such as 1, which sweeps past like strange nocturnal fancies, 4 with its mood of distressed pathos, 6 and 7 contrasted in pace but related to each other by a pattern of wide-spread accompanying figures, and the *Adagio* pair 13 and 14. The *finale* is boldly

planned but there are weaknesses in the way it is carried out. It is written on the principle of a ground, but as the recurrent phrase of 15 notes is announced by voices entering in succession (an octave higher each time) the opening is too like a fugal exposition which is all Subject and no Answer. Moreover, the subsidiary counterpoints are never melodically important enough to save the fourteen statements of the recurrent phrase preceding the brief and final *Presto* from being more unvaryingly conspicuous than the theme of a ground can well afford to be. The work has been successfully performed by Eiluned Davies, to whom it is dedicated. F. M.

Benjamin Britten. *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*. (Winthrop Rogers Edition.) 6s.

Everything that Benjamin Britten writes has what, for want of a better phrase, one may call the "professional touch", and these songs are one more example of his astonishing virtuosity in the technique of composition. Whether one is moved by the music or not, there is no denying the supreme competence with which it is presented. The artful simplicity of the 5th song, with its admirably subtle accompaniment, is something that appears to be quite beyond the powers of most contemporary British composers to accomplish, nor are there many who could give the required inevitability to the bi-tonal effects in the grave and thoughtful *Veggio co' bei vostri occhi un dolce luno*.

The appeal of his music, as such, is still perhaps intellectual rather than emotional. Over all Britten's work there is a kind of steely surface through which it is hard to penetrate. Wit, grace, skill—he has them all; of emotional warmth one is not so certain. Repeated hearings of the songs might persuade one that, in addition to their superb craftsmanship, which is obvious enough, there is also the final touch of inspiration that seems lacking. No doubt many listeners will disagree with this qualification, and for them, therefore, the songs will appear an even greater achievement than they do to those who, like the present writer, admire their enormously skilful presentation, while remaining comparatively unmoved by the purely musical content.

Norman Peterkin. *The tide rises, the tide falls* (Longfellow). (Oxford University Press.) 2s.

This song will largely depend for its success in performance on the skill of the accompanist, who must be able to suggest the surge and flow of the sea without letting the piano part sound unduly heavy. Granted this, it should be effective enough. The metronome mark,  $\text{♩} = 66$  seems surely rather strange for a song written in 3/4 of which the tempo direction is *Largo*.

R. Vaughan Williams. "The Blessing of the Swords", from Meyerbeer's *The Huguenots*. Arranged for mixed chorus and orchestra. (Oxford University Press.) 1s. 3d.

One cannot help regretting that the time given by the composer to arranging this excerpt from an old operatic war-horse had not been devoted to original work. For compared with the freshness of some of the choruses in Vaughan Williams' own operas, what a thing of shreds and patches, of pasteboard and putty, this survival of the past appears now! Good enough for the audiences of the '80's and '90's perhaps, was it worth while trying to resuscitate it for us to-day?

Mozart. Two Songs, edited by Herbert F. Ellingford. (1) *O Holy Bond*; (2) *Companions' Way*. (Oxford University Press.) 5d.

Two charming crumbs from the Mozartean table, the second having something of the enchanting grace and beauty of an aria from *Figaro*. Like Bach, Mozart's perfect craftsmanship never deserts him, and manifests itself in these trifles as unmistakably as in any of his more highly wrought works.



Arthur Bliss. *Seven American Poems*. Words by Edna St. Vincent Millay and Elinor Wylie. For low voice. (Boosey & Co.) 4s.

Edmund Rubbra. *Amoretti* (2nd Series). Five Sonnets by Edmund Spenser. (Joseph Williams, Ltd.) 4s. 6d.

#### AN OPEN LETTER

DEAR SIRs,—Shall you be offended if I ask you a question? Not out of idle curiosity, I assure you, but merely because, as Rosa Dartle would say—"I really do want to know, you know". It is just this. For whom exactly do you write your songs? An absurd question, no doubt. But reading through these (and many other contemporary songs) I can't help wondering what sort of audience (and singers) you have in your mind's ear when composing them. For these settings of yours seem to me foredoomed to failure for one reason alone—they are unvocal as a whole or, even when the voice part is reasonably singable, are still undistinguished from the melodic point of view. It is odd that having mastered, as you both have mastered, the technique of writing for that complex instrument, the modern orchestra, you should fail so lamentably when writing for such a comparatively simple mechanism as the human larynx. You would not write for the viola as if it were a trumpet, nor for the flute as for a trombone, yet you seem completely indifferent as to what is, or is not, effective for the voice. It is not that your vocal music is, in comparison to your purely instrumental works, so decidedly inferior. That may be a matter for debate. What is certain is that it is written so *ineffectively*. You, Mr. Bliss, who are such a master of scoring for the orchestra, examine, if you will, the vocal part of the third song of your cycle, *Feast*, particularly the first eight bars. I ask you, in all sincerity, whether you really think the greatest singer in the world could conceal the awkwardness and entirely unvocal character of the melodic line here. And you, Mr. Rubbra, whose treatment of the voice shows more consideration for its limitations than does your distinguished contemporary—cannot you give your singers anything more significant than these long and rather spineless phrases to which you have wedded the poetry of Spenser? Art, unlike history, does not repeat itself, and no one expects the modern song-writer to imitate his great predecessors, whether they be Dowland or Schubert, Campion or Brahms. But surely the essential spirit of their work might be absorbed into a new idiom, as it assuredly will be when we have the luck to produce a great song writer again—that divinely lyrical gift that enabled them to write songs that, as was said of *Feldeinsamkeit*—"tug at the very heart-strings". Cannot you gentlemen, with all your gifts and accomplishments, write songs that cry out for singing and not, as here, a series of vocal obstacle races?

Apologizing for what may seem, but is certainly not meant to be, effrontery,

Yours respectfully,

THE REVIEWER.

Edmund Rubbra. *Madrigals* (Thomas Campion.) For mixed voices. No. 1, *Leave Prolonging Thy Distress*, 5d. No. 2, *So Sweet is Thy Discourse*, 5d. (Winthrop Roger's Edition.)

Darius Milhaud. *Cantate de la Guerre*, 1s. 3d. *Cantate de la Paix*, 1s. *Les Deux Cités*. (1) *Babylon*, 1s.; (2) *Elegy*, 8d.; (3) *Jerusalem*, 1s. 3d. For mixed voices. (Paul Claudel.) (G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.)

"How gladly would one praise his compositions if only one could find in them one drop of blood!" Thus Brahms on the works of his adoring friend, Heinrich von Herzogenberg. To apply this criticism to Rubbra's work as a whole would be monstrously unfair, but there are occasions, as here, when his music seems more remarkable for exquisite craftsmanship than for any genuine emotional warmth. Admirably written from the technical standpoint, these madrigals somehow give the impression of having been

conceived in a kind of mental refrigerator, resulting in music that, for all its virtues, remains

"Faultily faultless, splendidly null."

All the same, what lovely workmanship!

Milhaud is perhaps not so technically accomplished a composer as Rubbra. Nevertheless, this series of part-songs has a kind of crude eloquence that is curiously moving; *Les Deux Cités* in particular, gives one a real impression of a congregation of singers sitting by Babylonian waters, weeping for their lost Sion. Indeed, it is probably not reading too much between the lines to regard this group of pieces as a kind of musical tribute by the composer to his tortured compatriots in Europe. A musical purist might object that the part-writing is too consistently vertical, and that the voices are used in too instrumental a manner at times. The fact remains that these part-songs have originality and beauty, and as such deserve, and one hopes will receive, performances on both sides of the Atlantic.

William Schuman. *Prelude* (Thomas Wolfe.) 1s.; *Holiday Song* (Taggard.) 8d.; *Requiescat* (Wordless.) 6d. Four Canonic Choruses: (1) *Epitaph* (St. Millay); (2) *Epitaph for Conrad* (Cullen); (3) *Night Stuff* (Sandberg.); (4) *Come not when I am dead* (Tennyson.) 8d. For Mixed Voices. (G. Schirmer, Inc., New York.)

Medical science has established the fact that all of us are "allergic" to certain foods. Perhaps there is an aesthetic analogy to this. For instance, a violent reaction against the work of this or that composer may mean nothing more than some intellectual shortcoming in the listener or (allowing that he, too, is human) the reviewer. Sheltering under such an assumption the present writer makes bold to suggest that the combination of speaking and singing voices is surely an unnatural alliance (see *Prelude*), that musical canons should sound natural and inevitable, and not as laboriously conceived academic exercises (see *Night Stuff*); that humming (even "with a rich tone" as directed) is a menial sort of a job for a choir (see *Requiescat*); that—but enough. Already there are probably admirers of this composer indignantly murmuring: "O Allergy! what critical crimes are committed in thy name!"

Hubert Hales. *Tell me where is fancy bred?* Part-song for mixed voices. 4d.

Ernest A. Dicks. *The King of Love*. Unison song with descant. (Joseph Williams, Ltd.) 3d.

Both these pieces are specimens of what the Germans call *Kapellmeister* music; that is to say, they are capably written and effective enough in their own way, without attempting any originality of thought. The setting of *The King of Love*, moreover, does not shake one's conviction that the original hymn-tune is still the best.

Phyllis Tate. *My love could walk*. (W. H. Davies.) (Oxford University Press.)

It is a pity that this song was not written in strophic form as the music to the first and third verses is charming. The middle section is spoiled by the fact that the harmonic texture in the piano part does not make very good musical sense, and the song as a whole suffers in consequence. One might also suggest that it is time for some of our native composers to observe a close season for neo-Vaughan Williams modalisms.

C. W. O.

## London Concerts

Vaughan Williams. *Symphony in D major*. Promenade Concerts, Royal Albert Hall, 24th June, 1943. Conducted by the composer.

This fifth symphonic work by Vaughan Williams comes after a symphonic silence of nine years. Its predecessors began their series with the *Sea Symphony* in 1910, so that they cover thirty-three years of Vaughan Williams' composing life, which can hardly be said to have begun more than forty years ago.

There was little in those four symphonies which, as a common factor, could help one to guess what the next would be, in form or idea. Each was a particular search for a particular truth, and openly forged its own language in the course of the search. There has been a growing tendency towards abstraction, comparable to Thomas Hardy's passing, as his mind widened, from the novel to the epic drama. The *London Symphony* may be likened in its use of local colour to *Far from the Madding Crowd*, the F minor *Symphony to The Dynasts*. There has also been shown by Vaughan Williams increasing control over the texture of his music; the operas and the recent *Household Music* have the splendid narrative style of Shakespeare's blank verse. In the new symphony these two characteristics can be found—a narrative style and a symbolisation rather than a personification of human qualities.

Dedicated ("in sincerest flattery") to Sibelius, the *Symphony* avows in a composer's note that some of its themes are taken from an unfinished opera on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. There is no "programme", save that the slow movement, named "Romance", bears a quotation from Bunyan, about Christian's seeing the Cross at the Sepulchre. There is no regular "sonata form". The first movement opens with a horn call and a simple rising phrase, which is developed into an elemental tune in the major. After a pentatonic allegro section, it settles down again into the opening matter with the keys adjusted. (The unexpected E major proves in performance to be absolutely right.) The scherzo that follows is built on rising fourths. It is feathery in texture and rather (at least to me) harsh and carping in quality. The Romance is long and rhapsodic, and the finale, beginning as a passacaglia, after a recitative-like development returns to the horn call. The long coda is peaceful, and bears a distinct resemblance, which cannot be accidental, to the German Easter hymn, *Lasst uns erfreuen*.

I was fortunate in having had opportunity to study the work for some considerable period before the first public performance, and had formed a very high opinion of it, especially in its latest revision. The performance itself increased my deep pleasure in the music, though I do not think the Albert Hall is at all a suitable *milieu* for it. In the centre stalls, slightly towards the west of the north entrance, the scherzo does not sound, and there was a marked inaudibility of bass throughout. The scoring is varied and always interesting, though only two horns are used; a good example is the slightly acrid flavour of the return of the first subject of the first movement, which is exactly right. The composer conducted the London Philharmonic Orchestra, which played well. But I found that I could not get away from a feeling of the late Hamilton Harty; I was thinking, all the time, "How beautifully Harty would have done this!" This large-scale but quiet music is exactly what he would have liked.

There can be little doubt that this symphony is Vaughan Williams at his best. Criticisms I have seen have likened it to the *Tallis Fantasia*. I find the music infinitely more mature, more flexible, more adroitly managed, more lucid, and deeper in meaning. The creative future of this ever-young composer defies all imagination. He lays the seal of mastery upon every work he now writes, and experience has not one whit dulled his power of perception or his range of interests. The rare and exquisite beauty of this symphony is something that cannot be conveyed by a descriptive pen. If it has added once more to his great stature, it has also provided one studious listener with a new and important experience in the art of music.

H. J. F.

## Correspondence

To the Editor, THE MUSIC REVIEW.

OXFORD.

### DON GIOVANNI

SIR,—In the last number Mr. E. H. W. Meyerstein raised the question whether Don Giovanni has to be represented on the stage as a boy libertine or as a man of mature years, and adds to his question the reproduction of an engraving from the first edition of the full score published by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1801. Here Don Giovanni is depicted as a youth. Mr. Meyerstein argues from three instances—"the violence of the preliminary duel, the insolence of the catalogue which the valet carries with him, and the deliriously carefree abandon of the aria *Finch han dal vino*"—that these details "are far more in consonance with youth or earliest manhood than with seasoned rascality". Mr. Meyerstein is certainly right in pointing to these facts as supporting the view that originally Don Giovanni was represented as a young man. We learn from Jahn-Abert's biography that Luigi Bassi, who was Mozart's first Don Giovanni, was born in 1765 at Pesaro. He was a man of 22 years of age when he created the rôle and he still looks like a boy on the engraving, printed at Prague in 1790, which E. Lert published in his book *Mozart auf dem Theater*. Here Bassi is represented in the rôle of Don Giovanni as a young gentleman, dressed in a sumptuous Rococo costume. It was only in the second decade of the nineteenth century that actors started to represent Don Giovanni with a beard, and gradually transformed the young libertine into a type similar to that of the Flying Dutchman. But those listeners who have seen Ezio Pinza as Don Giovanni may remember how impressive this singer was, giving Don Giovanni as an irresponsible young man, playing cruelly, like a child, with all the women he meets. It is his curse that he never experiences love and remains unaltered by any of his love affairs. Thus Mozart's hero is very similar to Tirso de Molina's Don Giovanni, and his punishment is inevitable. From a Spanish friend I learned that a Spanish nineteenth century version of the play is always performed on All Souls' Day. This fact too supports the view expressed in your article in the first number of Volume IV of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

Yours faithfully,

E. J. WELLESZ.

To the Editor, THE MUSIC REVIEW.

CAMBRIDGE.

SIR,—May I raise one point in reply to Mr. E. H. W. Meyerstein's interesting letter regarding the engraved title-vignette of the first full score of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*? It seems most unlikely that V. G. Kinninger, the designer of the vignette and a very minor artist, carefully read through Da Ponte's libretto. Otherwise he would have learned from Leporello's great *Madamina* aria, not only that Don Giovanni was a much-travelled man, but that the sheer number of his conquests, if only for technical reasons, made it inadvisable to represent the Don as a mere boy.

Yours faithfully,

PAUL HIRSCH.

To the Editor, THE MUSIC REVIEW.

TAKELEY.

### DR. SCHOLES AND THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

SIR,—I greatly regret, in these days of paper shortage, to have been the immediate, if not altogether innocent cause of this lengthy discussion. My rejoinder shall be as concise as I can make it, and, though like breeds like, I will incline to brevity rather than verbosity.

1. Very well: Dr. Scholes does lay claim to original research and it must be left to his readers to judge of the quality and quantity of new grain produced by his diligent sifting of so many important collections.

2. Dr. Scholes rephrases my criticism, but does not answer it. He says, in effect, (a) that he endorses my estimate of his conception of the general reader and (b) that the missing references are all in his large book. But no one can judge of that who has not a key to the safe of the

Oxford University Press, neither is any criticism of a published book satisfactorily answered by saying that its shortcomings are corrected in a book so far unpublished.

3. Readers of his booklet can judge for themselves whether it is loosely and ramblingly arranged or not. Why is Dr. Scholes reluctant to leave it to them? Three pointers to the sort of thing I mean are (1) on p. 13, he quotes, without criticism, a statement that in 1745 the words were sung "to an old anthem tune". On p. 22 he refers to a galliard, a minuet, a folk song, and a Genevan patriotic song as part of its musical ancestry, but his only reference to an anthem is to "an elaborate fiction" in "Leigh Henry's extremely fanciful biography" of John Bull. (Dr. Scholes certainly does not study politeness in criticism of other writers.) On p. 21 he says there is no precedent in vocal music for the metre of the song.

On p. 18, and in the legend to the plate facing p. 31, he makes the point that the Jacobite version was current throughout the eighteenth century. But he has already accepted the evidence of earlier writers for a 17th century origin. Moreover, the underline to the illustration facing p. 31 is itself a small masterpiece of ratiocination. The glass bears the inconvenient date of 1749, but Dr. Scholes pooh-poohs this as possibly the work of anyone who possessed a diamond. (How true, and how completely inapposite.) He then quotes Bles' date for the glass as 1725, thus edging the reader back 24 years earlier, quite ignoring the fact that it is not the date of the glass but of the inscription that is of present importance.

Finally, on this point, what conceivable appositeness or purpose is served by the footnote on p. 60—a quotation from Shirer's *Berlin Diary* about Belgians and Frenchmen praying nightly for British bombings and cheering the bomb which kills themselves.

4. I do not think Dr. Scholes is at all clear on the important dates. He thinks he is. Only readers of his booklet can possibly judge between us.

5. I have already dealt with the Scholes-Bles drinking glass in paragraph 3, and with the contents of the Oxford Press safe in paragraph 2.

6. It is useless for Dr. Scholes to fling triumphantly at my head the mistakes made by Chappell. The point is that "Thesaurus Musicus" shows distinct traces on its title-page that the plate from which it is printed had previously borne a different title. Whether that title was "Harmonia Anglicana" or not is a matter of minor importance. Anyone with half an eye will admit that, in the form we know it, the book contains evidence of its secondary nature and that it is not true to say as Dr. Scholes does on p. 24, that "The first publication of words and tune was . . . in *Thesaurus Musicus*, 1744 . . .".

7. The point I tried to make about Henry Carey's claim was that Dr. Scholes dismissed it too cavalierly. I will not follow the Dr.'s maze of confusing rumour-mongering, but will confine myself to pointing out that I have already told readers that they will get better treatment of the whole subject from Cummings. Dr. Scholes merely confirms my suggestion by his admission that thirteen pages are there devoted to the Carey claim, whereas he himself dismisses it in a short paragraph.

In the last paragraph of section 7 of his reply to me, however, he admits that what I find a supremely interesting phase of the investigation is to him the merest by-play. For, he writes, the utmost that Carey could possibly lay claim to is "some adaptation". As if it were not of supreme importance to discover precisely who it was that was responsible for the brilliant improvisation by which an obscure and unpopular Jacobite ballad was transformed into the first of all national anthems and one which we revere to this very day. And surely it is a cause for severe disappointment that we are as ignorant on that score to-day as ever we were, despite all Dr. Scholes' diligent siftings.

8-9. The eunuchs. I am sorry my little joke has upset him so much. I fear he thinks it not quite nice of me to have introduced the subject at all. With all due respect to the authority of *Grove*, a compilation which still stands more than head and shoulders above all its rivals, I suggest that there are more apposite sources from which the biological facts about eunuchism may be derived. Nevertheless Dr. Scholes' quotation from it is unexceptionable. Only his suggested inference from it is questionable. Surely anyone with more than a passing acquaintanceship with the subject knows quite well that the abnormal physical development of eunuchs is in the effeminising of their contours.

His other authority is even less fortunate for him. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* defines a Eunuch as "An emasculated male", and the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, surely unexceptionable, as issued by Dr. Scholes' own publishers, defines the verb emasculate as "make effeminate".

Moreover we are not concerned with dray horses or warriors of the ancient past (does the existence of Amazons make militarism characteristic of all women?) but with a particular class of person in a particular period, and it remains the fact that the castrati of the eighteenth century English operatic stage were figures of fun.

They were over-developed. The caricature mentioned by Dr. Scholes as reproduced in his *Companion* is only one of many; but he has surely missed the whole point of it. I defy anyone to suggest that the figures in this caricature are the bold, warrior type that Dr. Scholes suggests,

or, indeed, to mistake them for anything other than what they were—grossly top-heavy figures of fun.

Dr. Scholes is heavily scornful of my pretended knowledge of eighteenth century musical history, but one needs to know little of it indeed to avoid the slapdash miscalculations of which he is constantly guilty. If he wishes to know, beyond a peradventure, what the eighteenth century thought of these singers let him not confine himself to twentieth century accounts but return to his diligent siftings and examine, for example, the anonymous series of poems supposed to have been exchanged between Mrs. Robinson and Senesino, or between Teresa Constantia Phillips and Farinelli. Or, if that is too irksome a task, let him read Wycherley's *Country Wife*.

10. For Udall I must refer the reader to the original, in which he will find anticipated not merely the sentiments quoted by Dr. Scholes but a remarkably detailed anticipation of much else in the national anthem, especially of the third verse. The point about the account of Edward VI's passage through London, which Dr. Scholes so neatly passes over, is that it antedates any reference given by him to anything more detailed than the mere sentiment "God Save the King", which he finds in Coverdale and in the "Order of the Fleet" of 1544. It is not, I regret to learn, to be included in even the larger book, but, unless the key of the Oxford Press safe has been quietly dropped into the Isis, there is yet time.

I am puzzled to know how to set right the error mentioned in Dr. Scholes' last point. He clearly objects to the word "small" as applied to himself. But I could not very well have omitted it without being both ungrammatical and impolite. "A work of pretensions" would not do at all. Should I have said "a work of great pretensions"? I cannot think that this would have pleased Dr. Scholes more. I see, in fact, that he objects to both "small" and "pretensions", but if I omit both I must have a conclusion to the sentence. I am sure he would not prefer, neither would I have used, the word pretentiousness. I should welcome other suggestions.

Yours faithfully,

PERCY H. MUIR.

To the Editor, THE MUSIC REVIEW.

OXFORD.

SIR,—You have sent me a proof of Mr. Percy H. Muir's letter as above, and have told me that I may reply to it but that "200 words is the limit."

As a reply of 200 words to a detailed document of 1400 words is obviously out of the question I prefer to say that I consider this letter of Mr. Muir to be an aggravation of his original offence—that is, I look upon it as an impudent travesty both of my letter to which it professes to be a reply and, where it refers to my booklet *God save the King*, of that also. I would, then, ask any of your readers who are at all interested to check each statement Mr. Muir now makes by reference to my letter or my booklet, as the case may be.

As one slight instance of the need for this I will take one of Mr. Muir's opening paragraphs—"Dr. Scholes rephrases my criticism but does not answer it." Reference to my letter will show that I quoted Mr. Muir's statement exactly as it originally stood, without one word of "rephrasing," and that I did then quite fully answer it.

After checking Mr. Muir's letter in the manner suggested readers should finally go through my letter to which he professes to be replying, in order to note any complaints on my part which he has left without attention.

Yours faithfully,

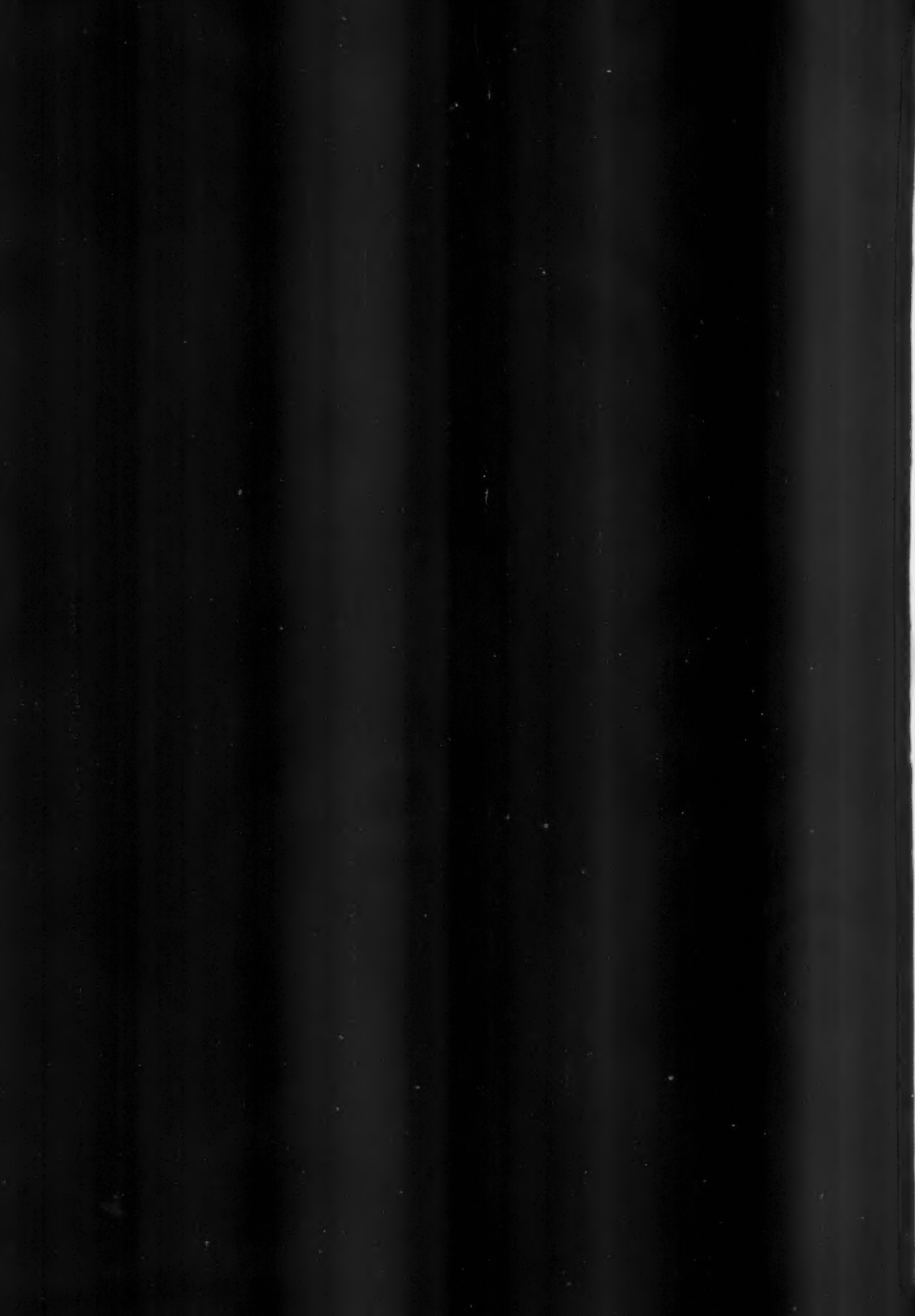
PERCY A. SCHOLES.

[This correspondence is now closed—Ed.]

Reviews of Gramophone Records are unavoidably held over. There are several new issues of great interest which will be given space in the November MUSIC REVIEW.—(Ed.)







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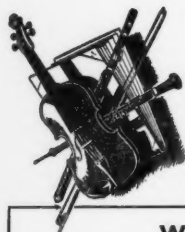
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